

THE CHURCH of the  
UNITED BRETHREN  
✝ IN CHRIST

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# HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

OF THE

## UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST

BY  
REV. DANIEL BERGER, D.D.



16086-C<sup>2</sup>-2

DAYTON, OHIO  
United Brethren Publishing House  
W. J. SHUEY, PUBLISHER  
1897



BY 1875  
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## PREFACE

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DURING a number of years past, there has been frequent expression of desire that a new history of the United Brethren Church should be written. The earlier work of Mr. Spayth traced the history with moderate fullness down to about the year 1825, and more cursorily to 1841. The sketch prepared by Ex-Bishop Hanby, intended as a kind of supplement to Mr. Spayth's writing, commencing at 1825, gave a rapid view down to 1850. The fuller history of Mr. Lawrence covered the ground again from the beginning, closing with the year 1861, the date of the publication of the second volume. The lapse of more than a third of a century, through a period which has witnessed great development in the progressive life of the Church, has greatly emphasized the need of a new work which should trace the history down to the present time.

The desire for a new history first found official expression in a resolution adopted by the General Conference of 1889, authorizing the publisher and trustees of the Publishing House to secure its preparation. No one being found who was willing to take up what seemed a rather formidable responsibility, the quadrennium passed without a beginning being made, and the General Conference of 1893 renewed the action of 1889. Under this authority, in May, 1894, the present writer was appointed to undertake the work. The task was accepted with a full sense of the responsibility involved, but with the hope that in due time it might be accomplished. He began early to make preparation for the work, collecting materials through extensive correspondence and from all other available sources. Other duties claiming a portion of his time, such as the care of a large congregation for nearly a year, and afterward of the Sunday-school literature of the Church, the writing itself proceeded with deliberation, a fact which the author trusts has resulted in advantage to the work.

In the preparation of the history the author has availed himself of all accessible sources of information, making of some a quite free use. Some of the books drawn upon are Spayth's "History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ," Lawrence's

"History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ," Drury's "Life of Rev. Philip William Otterbein," Harbaugh's "Life of Rev. Michael Schlatter," Harbaugh's "Fathers of the German Reformed Church," Bangs's and Stevens's Histories of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Yeakel's "History of the Evangelical Association," Funk's "Mennonite Church and Her Accusers," Henry Boehm's "Reminiscences," Newcomer's "Journal," Asbury's "Journal," Drury's "Life of Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner, D.D.," Davis's "Life of Bishop David Edwards, D.D.," Thompson's "Our Bishops," some of the volumes of "The American Church History Series," "Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841," E. L. Shuey's "Handbook of the United Brethren in Christ," Flickinger and McKee's History of Missions of the United Brethren Church, "History of the Woman's Missionary Association of the United Brethren in Christ," the "United Brethren Year-Book," the journal of the original conference, the General Conference journal, old annual-conference journals, and the files of some of the periodical publications.

In addition to these sources of information the author finds himself under great indebtedness to ministers and others throughout the entire Church. From every annual conference, from every institution of learning, and from the officers of the missionary and other societies of the Church, materials have been generously supplied, without which the history could not have appeared in so complete a form. But most of all is the author indebted to Bishop J. W. Hott, Prof. A. W. Drury, and W. A. Shuey, the committee appointed to examine the manuscript before publication. In addition to this examination Professor Drury also read the book again in proof, making various valuable suggestions. In this work the largest obligation is due to Mr. Shuey for his critical revision of the entire history, both in the manuscript and proof, and for his careful preparation of a large portion of the valuable materials in Part IV. and the pages following. The writer is also especially indebted to the publisher for placing at his disposal every facility for the prosecution of the work.

A constant aim of the author has been to secure as far as possible historical accuracy, and no pains have been spared to reach this end. How difficult this feature of the work is, few, perhaps, can comprehend, except those who have undertaken to write history. It is probable that in the earlier portions of the denominational history but few facts will in future be discovered that will in any important degree modify the statements now made. In the later portions a principal task is to select judiciously out of the abundance of the materials. So rapid, too, are the changes which are



constantly going forward, that much of what is fact to-day will be modified to-morrow. Among these are the changes in the boundary lines of conferences, and in the ministers constituting the conferences. The great Reaper is constantly busy, and transfers from one conference to another are so frequent that some names correctly placed at the date when portions were written will already appear out of their true relation. The author must here also express his regret that many of the worthy dead, as also of the living, could not receive a fuller mention, the reasonable limits of a single volume forbidding further extension. The portions relating to the revision movement, and the long legal conflicts which ensued, follow closely the official records, and may be relied upon as strictly historical.

In the execution of this responsible task the author has found an unusual pleasure in walking with the fathers of the Church over their old fields of toil for the Master, and in gaining a larger acquaintance with the noble army of their successors in the Lord's vineyard. Many of these fathers, through a life spent from his childhood in the Church, he has met and known. Of the twenty-six bishops whom the Church has had, he has personally known twenty, nineteen of this number as guests either in his own or in his father's house. Of the long list of others who have held positions in the general offices of the Church, he has known every one. In the prosecution of his work, therefore, he has been associated with those whom he has known and loved as fathers and brethren, and for whom, living and dead, he cherishes the warmest Christian regard.

The work as now completed is commended to the good will of the reader, in the hope that it may promote better acquaintance with the past labors and triumphs of the Church, and aid in quickening zeal for its future enlargement, and so lead to the praise of Him whom we love and serve.

THE AUTHOR.

DAYTON, OHIO, April 15, 1897.



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<sup>1</sup> A steel engraving from an oil painting from life by Jarvis, the original being in possession of Mr. George Hoffman, of Leesburg, Virginia, for whose grandfather, Mr. Peter Hoffman, a vestryman in Otterbein's church, the painting was made, in October, 1810.

<sup>2</sup> From a lithograph based upon an oil painting in possession of the Methodist Historical Society at Baltimore, Maryland.





PART I  
GENERAL HISTORY



# HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST

## PART I GENERAL HISTORY

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD—1752-1774

### PRELIMINARY

THE Church of the United Brethren in Christ had its origin in the revival movement which prevailed in America during the latter half of the eighteenth and the earlier years of the nineteenth century. The state of religion in the colonies previous to this revival period had fallen to a very low plane. The historic New England revival, in which Jonathan Edwards was a leading figure, popularly called "The Great Awakening," was followed by a strong reaction, and spirituality had declined to a condition lower if possible than in the period preceding. Elsewhere in the colonies the same unhappy conditions existed. Dead formalism in the church services and open and unrebuked immorality among communicants broadly prevailed. The great revival in the British Islands, under John and Charles Wesley and their assisting lay preachers, was not yet felt on the western side of the great waters. The brief visit of the Wesleys to Georgia, in the early beginnings of their career, was undertaken chiefly as a mission to the Indians of that colony, and

but little permanent fruit resulted. The visits of George Whitefield to the same colony were extended northward along the Atlantic Coast as far as Maine, and wherever he went his preaching awakened the profoundest interest. Whether coöperating, as he did, with Edwards, or pushing his extended journeys up and down the line of the colonies, thousands hastened to hear his brilliant eloquence, and everywhere religious enthusiasm was kindled to a white heat. But notwithstanding all this apparent success, and the fact that many hundred professed conversion under his preaching, and that in his burning zeal he thirteen times crossed the Atlantic, it remains true that soon after his death the work lapsed so effectually that Methodism does not date its origin in America to the visits of any of these distinguished apostles of that period.

It was about this time, in the opening years of the second half of the eighteenth century, that a young man of scholarly accomplishments, and a heart burning with holy zeal, came as a missionary to America, who, after his more perfect enlightenment and deeper experience in the mysteries of the gospel, was to become, under the direction of Divine Providence, the principal founder of the Church of whose origin and progressive development these pages are to speak,—the Rev. Philip William Otterbein. The early history of any denomination is largely the history of the men under whose labors such denomination took form. Hence the story of the founding will be best told by a sketch of some of the men whose work assumed the larger proportions, with such review of their labors as may be practicable. And here we are met, at the outset, with a fact that has proved a most serious difficulty to the historians of nearly all the older religious denominations—the extreme paucity of materials in the earlier periods of their history. In the case of



the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, this is conspicuously true. The founders of the Church for a long time had little thought of forming an independent church organization, and when once Providence so clearly marked out their course that they could not do otherwise than take those steps which must lead to a separate denominational life, they for the most part gave themselves little concern as to what the world coming after them should know of their personal history, or of the labors they undertook, and the rich vintage which, through great toil and sacrifice, they succeeded in gathering for the Master.

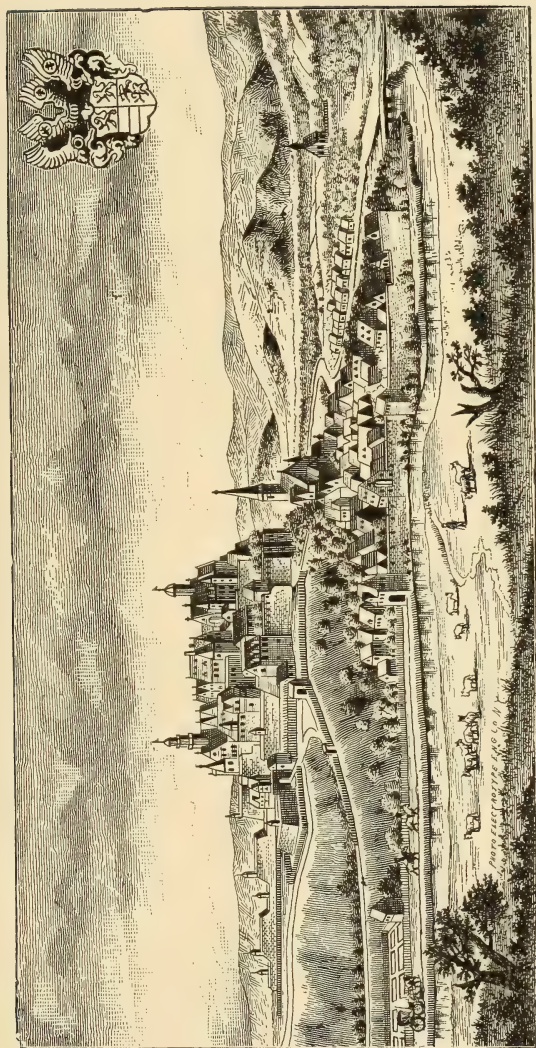
## CHAPTER I

### PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN

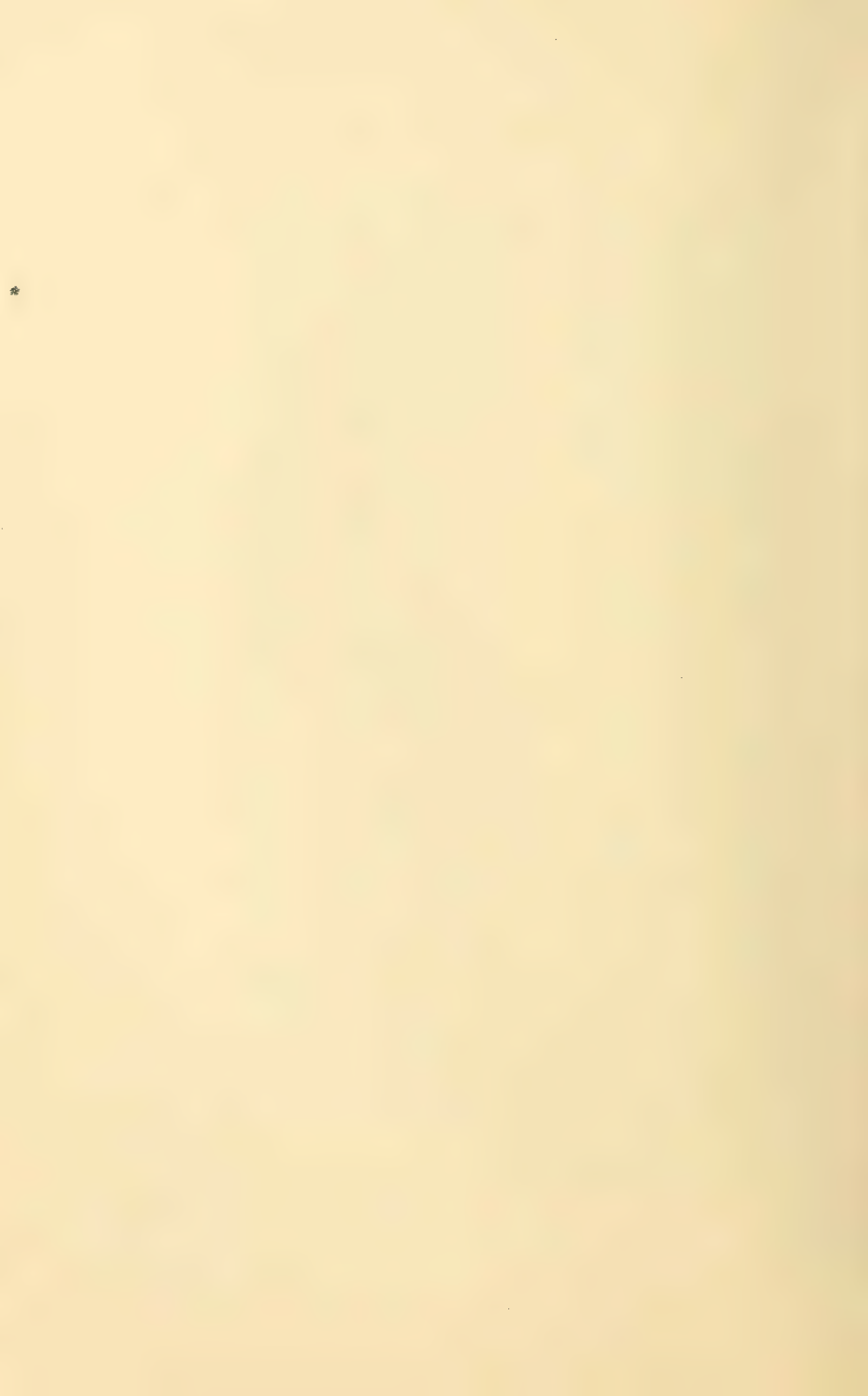
#### I. PARENTAGE, BIRTH, AND EARLY YEARS OF MR. OTTERBEIN.

PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN, whose name stands conspicuous above the names of his fellow-laborers as the founder of the United Brethren Church, was born in the town of Dillenburg, in the duchy of Nassau, Germany, on the third day of June,<sup>1</sup> 1726. This town of Dillenburg was for several centuries, in the older Germany, of considerable importance, being the place of residence of a long line of princes, some of whom gained note in history. Nassau, bordering in part on the river Rhine, and now known on the map as Wiesbaden, is one of the most fertile districts of Germany. It embraces an area of a little over eighteen hundred square miles, and contains at the present time a population of about half a million, the greater number of whom are Protestants. Besides furnishing, in the earlier times, an emperor to Germany, it reached also

<sup>1</sup>Several different dates have been named as the time of Otterbein's birth. A Baltimore daily, at the time of his death, gave the date as June 2. The inscription on his tomb in the cemetery connected with the old Otterbein Church in Baltimore gives the date as June 4. This seems to follow the credentials given him by the faculty at Herborn when he was about to start for America. The baptismal record preserved in the old church at Dillenburg gives June 3 as the day, the ceremony of baptism occurring on June 6. Rev. Henry G. Spayth, in his "History of the United Brethren in Christ," gives March 6 as the date; upon what authority is not now known. I. D. Rupp gives November 6. In all these varying dates there is no disagreement as to the year—that is, 1726. Since the baptism occurred but three days after the birth, every presumption seems to favor the date given in the old record as the correct one. A transcript of this record appears in the *Life of Otterbein* by Prof. A. W. Drury. See Dr. A. W. Drury's *Life of Philip William Otterbein*, pp. 24, 25; also p. 22 in this volume.



DILLENBURG IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.



the higher distinction of giving to Europe the line of the Orange princes. The conditions of climate and soil and the relationship of boundaries were favorable to the production of a sturdy, intelligent, and thrifty population, and such were the characteristics of its inhabitants from an early period.

The town of Dillenburg is picturesquely situated on the river Dille, from which it takes its name. The town is built on the sloping land bordering on the river, while the ancient castle stood on the hill overlooking the river and valley. This castle stood in the time when Mr. Otterbein was born, and for over thirty years longer, as the proud defense of the city. It was the home of an illustrious line of princes, among whom was counted William the Silent, who was born within its walls, and inheriting large possessions in the Netherlands achieved the independence of that country. In 1760 this castle yielded to the assaults of the French, and after remaining for more than a century a dreary ruin, it was succeeded by a noble monument to the memory of William, erected jointly by the people of Holland and Nassau. The monument was dedicated in June, 1875.

But we are for the present interested more in a plain but substantial old home at the foot of the hill than in this proud palace of the early rulers, just as the humble manger and its lowly surroundings of an ancient town in Judea hold for us a stronger fascination than the stately dwellings or the royal courts of imperial Jerusalem; a home from whose door came forth no mailed warrior, armed with sword or spear, but instead a divinely appointed messenger, whose service should be rich with blessing to his fellow-men for generations to come. Just to the right of the castle, as seen in our illustration, and in the rear of the church, whose spire points toward heaven, remains



to this day the solidly built house in which the Otterbein family for a number of years resided, and in which Mr. Otterbein first opened his eyes to the light. Close to this old residence stands also the building in which was kept the Reformed Latin school over which Mr. Otterbein's father was principal. The church is Reformed, and in its archives remains the record of Mr. Otterbein's birth and baptism.<sup>1</sup> The population of Dillenburg in the middle of the eighteenth century was about three thousand. This number has been but slightly advanced since then, being now about four thousand.

## II. THE OTTERBEIN FAMILY.

The prophet Isaiah directed the people of his time to look back to the rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged, to Abraham their father, and to Sarah that bare them.<sup>2</sup> And so it may be profitable for us here to look to the family and surroundings from which God brought forth that man of refined and thorough culture, and of deep and fervent spirituality, who was to achieve so blessed a work in the New World, and whose memory was to be so lovingly embalmed in the hearts of so many thousands.

The history of the Otterbein family is preserved from the middle of the seventeenth century. It was in the year 1650 that John Otterbein came to Dillenburg, and was appointed to the office of court-trumpeter. One of his sons, Charles Frederick, marrying the daughter of

<sup>1</sup>The following is the entry: "To Mr. John Daniel Otterbein, præceptor primario [rector, or principal] of the Latin school, and Mrs. Wilhelmina Henrietta, were born twins on the third of June, early in the morning at two o'clock. The older is a son, and the second a daughter. Both were baptized on the sixth of June. The godfather for the son was Philip William Keller, steward of the kitchen [Küchenmeister] to the court; the godmother for the second, wife of Mr. John Martin Keller, butler [Kellermeister] to the court. The son was called Philip William, and the daughter Anna Margaret." —Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Isa. 51: 1, 2.

Pastor Hatzfeldt, of Driedorf, became the father of John Daniel, and through him the grandfather of Philip William Otterbein. The strong religious instinct which so notably distinguished the Otterbein name, began to have a decided development in the family of Charles Frederick, two of his six children becoming ministers. From this time forward for several generations the family abounds with names distinguished alike for learning and piety. Thus Mr. Otterbein's grandfather, his father, and his father's brother were ministers, as were also his brothers, five in number, and the four sons of his oldest brother.

John Daniel, the father of Philip William Otterbein, was born two centuries ago, on the sixth of September, 1696. He was a man of fine culture and abilities, and became principal of the Reformed Latin school in the place of his birth. His learning was recognized by the faculty at Herborn in an official document, the original of which is yet preserved. On his mother's side Mr. Otterbein was equally favored in the endowment which comes with birth. Wilhelmina Henrietta, the daughter of John Jacob Hoerlen, who became the wife of John Daniel Otterbein, was a woman of rare intellectual and spiritual worth, as well as of fine personal accomplishments, and was eminently fitted by her natural and acquired gifts to train to manhood a son who was destined to so illustrious a mission in life. The honored faculty at Herborn, the school in which his sons were educated, and in which Mr. Otterbein was for a time a preceptor, spoke of her in an official paper in terms of highest commendation. But we see the triumph of her heroic qualities rather in the successful rearing of her large family, after the early death of her husband, her six sons completing the full course of study, literary and theological, required in the school at Herborn, and all of them

becoming ministers of the gospel of Christ. Nothing could give stronger proof of high moral and intellectual character, as well as of the deeper maternal and religious instincts, than the ability to exert such an influence over a large family of sons, and lead them, without an exception, to so honorable a goal. The one daughter whom she reared gave proof of the same type of character as the sons, in becoming the wife of a Reformed minister.

Mr. Otterbein's father, having served in the Latin school at Dillenburg for a period of nine years, accepted, in the spring of 1728, the pastoral care of two congregations, one at Frohnhausen, and the other at Wissenbach. Frohnhausen was situated three miles north of Dillenburg, and being the larger of the two places, he removed there. His pastorate here continued for fourteen years, when it was terminated by his death, in 1742. Philip William, the second of the sons who lived to maturity, was at the time of the removal to Frohnhausen not quite two years old, and was about sixteen at the time of his father's death. All the younger children were born in Frohnhausen, and at the time of the father's death the youngest was only four years old. Only slender means were left for the future support of the mother and family, but Mrs. Otterbein, while she could have remained for a year in the parsonage, decided to remove at once to Herborn, where the education of her children, broken off by the father's untimely death, could be continued under favorable conditions. In 1744 the oldest son, John Henry, then twenty-two years of age, received an appointment as teacher in Herborn, which brought him an income equal to one-half his father's salary, and the year following he was made vicar at Ockersdorf. In 1748, six years after the death of his father, Philip William, then twenty-two years of age, was made a preceptor in Herborn. The

income of his older brother had all been given for the support of the family and the education of its younger members, and that of Philip William was now added for the same object until, several years later, he set sail for his new field of labor in America. Thus the noble spirit of the older sons was manifested in the assistance which they gave to the mother and the younger children, enabling the younger sons as they grew up to enter upon the same advantages which the toils and sacrifices of the mother had secured for them. The third son, when he reached maturity, received a like appointment in the school, and, like his older brothers, devoted his earnings to the support of the mother and the education of the children who were below him in age.

To John Daniel and Wilhelmina Henrietta Otterbein there were born ten children—seven sons and three daughters. Two of the daughters died in infancy, and one son at twelve years of age. The remaining six sons all lived to maturity, and, as already noted, all became ministers, their ages at death ranging from sixty-eight to eighty-seven, the last being the age of William. Three of them became authors, publishing works on various subjects. George Godfrey, the fourth son, energetically opposed the rising tide of the rationalism of that day. He published three volumes on the Heidelberg Catechism. His writings on this and other subjects, it is said, were of a high order, and some of them found their way to America. John Daniel, the fifth son, also author of a work on the Heidelberg Catechism, was promoted to a seat in the consistory. John Charles, the third son, spent his entire mature life at Herborn, and in connection with the school, being teacher or professor in the institution to the end of his life, for ten years its co-rector, or vice-president, and during the last seventeen



years its rector, or president. It fell to the lot of this son to take affectionate care of the mother of this noble family in her later years, she, like her sons, dying at an advanced age.<sup>1</sup>

### III. THE SCHOOL AT HERBORN.

Herborn was a small town contiguous to Dillenburg and Frohnhausen, being situated about three miles south from the former. It contained about twenty-five hundred inhabitants. Of the noted school at this place, in which the sons of the Otterbein family were educated, and which contributed in so great a degree in developing the high type of character to which they attained, something further is here to be said. The school was founded in the year 1584, a little over four centuries ago, and while the fires of the Reformation were yet warmly burning. Its professors were men of decided character, distinguished alike for sound learning and for a distinct apprehension of the meaning of a spiritual Christianity. The school embraced the several departments belonging to institutions of the higher grades at that time, and while it did not quite reach, it approached nearly in type to the German university. Its theological course is said to have been rather more full than those of the theological seminaries of the present time.

Among the most distinguished names of its professors in the time to which our history belongs, were those of Dr. John Henry Schramm, Dr. Valentine Arnold, and Dr. John Eberhardt Rau. Dr. Schramm was the head of the institution, and was at the same time chief pastor of the local church at Herborn. He was especially distinguished for his clear conception of the spiritual and practical aspects of the Christian faith. Dr. Arnold, born at Dillenburg in

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 31-34.

1712, had been a student in the Latin school under John Daniel Otterbein, and formed a special attachment to the son, Philip William. Dr. Drury, in his *Life of Otterbein*, remarks of him that he "was a man of lovely and noble character, a man of faith and zeal," and that "he attained renown in Oriental and rabbinical literature." Dr. Rau also acquired distinction as a scholar in Oriental learning, and wrote a number of volumes on Oriental subjects. These men, further, were in intimate correspondence with the most spiritual of the theologians of the Netherlands, as well as with men of like character in other parts of continental Europe, and in the British Islands. The writings of Philip Doddridge, which exerted so wholesome an influence in quickening a deeper piety, were read by them with pleasure and commended to their students. It will thus be seen that while the best opportunities for scholastic attainment were presented to Mr. Otterbein, the spiritual influences in the school combined with those of his pious home to develop in him those high ideas of spiritual life which proved so potent an agency in the great work upon which he was to enter in the field for which God was preparing him. It will be in place to add here that, while the theology of the Reformed Church was substantially Calvinistic, the peculiar tenets of that form of faith were held less rigidly at Herborn, as indeed among German scholars generally, than they were in Holland and other parts of Europe. This fact may account in some degree for the readiness with which Mr. Otterbein found himself able, in more advanced life, to enter into harmonious fellowship with men educated in other schools of faith, but partaking of the same earnest spiritual life, and in time to become the founder and chief leader of a church whose faith found expression in Arminian symbols.

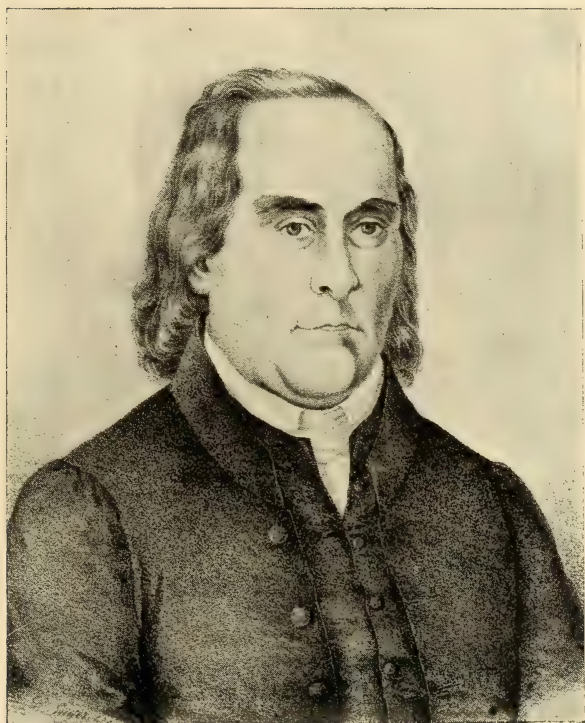


## IV. WORK IN HERBORN AND OCKERSDORF.

It was not an unusual thing in Germany for candidates for the holy ministry, after leaving college, to spend some time as private instructors in families of wealth and station. A special advantage thus secured was a degree of experience in teaching which fitted them the better for the work of catechetical instruction in the congregations of which they might afterward become pastors. Mr. Otterbein, in accordance with this custom, spent a short time as a "house-teacher," in the duchy of Berg, about one hundred miles from Herborn. He was, however, soon called back to service in the institution which had given him his education. Meanwhile, perhaps from considerations of modesty, he had not presented himself in an official way as a candidate for sacred orders. His appointment as a preceptor in Herborn made it necessary to take this step, and he passed the required examination. This was in 1748, and he was now nearly twenty-two years of age. About a year later he was appointed by the consistory at Dillenburg to the position of vicar at Ockersdorf, his older brother having accepted a charge at another place. This made it necessary that he receive full ordination as a minister, and he was accordingly ordained in the old church at Dillenburg on June 13, 1749.<sup>1</sup>

Ockersdorf was a small village about a mile from Herborn, and was under the charge of the second pastor at Herborn. There was only one church in Herborn, notwithstanding the considerable size of the town. Dr. Arnold was chief pastor. Both of these churches were served by the professors in the school, and Mr. Otterbein now performed the twofold duties of teacher and pastor. In addition to his Sabbath preaching he was required to preach also on the first Wednesday of each month, and on

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 44.



Waterbern



festival days. But, what may be a surprise to some readers, he was also required to hold a weekly meeting for prayer, an unusual form of service in the churches of Germany then as now. Was it here that he received a part of that special practical experience which proved so effectual in his evangelistic work in America when he entered upon this broader field? Thus Mr. Otterbein was made familiar from the beginning of his ministerial life with this form of service, which has proved so invaluable in encouraging a deeper devotional spirit in the church.<sup>1</sup>

This twofold relation as pastor and preceptor Mr. Otterbein sustained for a period of four years, until he was called to become a missionary to America, his duties also requiring him to preach statedly at another small village, near Ockersdorf, and in Herborn. To this work he brought the full measure of his youthful zeal. He was himself profoundly convinced of the truth of the gospel of Christ, and of the necessity for a pure life and an earnest religious spirit. This was in accordance with the training of his devout mother, and in harmony with the teaching he had received from the evangelical men who occupied the chairs of the Herborn school. But it was not to be expected that there would be a unanimous response of approval from the people to whom he preached. The stern rebukes of sin in high and in humbler life, and the earnest exhortations to forsake their evil-doing and enter upon a purer life and into a deeper spiritual experience, naturally awakened opposition on the part of some of his hearers. So strong did this adverse feeling become that some of the opposers invoked the authorities to put a check upon him. Others, however, warmly welcomed his earnest messages, and gave him their hearty support. His pious mother, deeply moved by these oppositions

<sup>1</sup> See Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 42-46.

against her son, and with a wise discernment of the true situation, said: "Ah, William, I expected this, and give you joy. This place is too narrow for you, my son; they will not receive you here; you will find your work elsewhere." She was also sometimes heard to say, as with the instinct of an interpreter of the divine purposes, "My William will have to be a missionary; he is so frank, so open, so natural, so prophet-like."<sup>1</sup> It is greatly to the credit of his superiors in the Herborn faculty and of the authorities at Dillenburg, and indicates the predominant religious tone in the school and among those whom it influenced most, that there was no interference with Mr. Otterbein's manner of preaching, and that he continued in unbroken relation with both the faculty and the Ockersdorf church until he was dismissed with great honor to go to his field in the New World.

Mr. Otterbein's certificate of ordination is a document of special interest, and a copy is herewith presented. It will be noticed by its date that the certificate was written nearly three years after the event, and was intended to be a credential certifying to his ordination as well as general character when about to "emigrate to foreign shores." The certificate is signed by Dr. Schramm, the senior professor or president of the Herborn school. Dr. Arnold and Pastor Klingelhöfer, as appears in the body of the certificate, assisted in the ordination. This certificate was preserved by Mr. Otterbein, and handed by him to his friend Rev. John Hildt, of Baltimore. The original, in Latin manuscript, is now in the archives of the United Brethren Publishing House, at Dayton, Ohio, having been presented to the House by Mr. Hildt. The certificate reads as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History of the United Brethren in Christ*, pp. 19, 20.



LECTORIS SALUTEM.

Reverendus et doctissimus vir juvenis, Philippus Guilhelmus Otterbeinius, gente Nassavius, domo Dillenburgensis, S. Ministerii Candidatus, classis tertiæ hujus pædagogii præceptor, manuum impositione adistentibus Cl. Arnoldo, professore atque primario cœtus Herbornensis pastore, et admodum reverendo Klingelhöfero ejusdem ecclesiæ secundario, ut vicariam in cœtu Ockersdorpiano præstaret opem, 13 Junii, 1749, ordinationis a me impetravit axioma. Quod his ad ejus requisitionem testor, et dilecto meo quondam auditori in peregrinas abiturienti oras, fausta quævis prosperumque iter ex animo precor, constantis mei adversus eum adfectus monimentum.

JOH. HENRICUS SCHRAMMIUS,  
*Theologia Doctor et Ecclesiarum Nassauicarum Superintendens.*

HERBORNÆ, III. Calendas Martias, MDCCLII.

The following is the translation as given by Professor Drury in his Life of Otterbein.

TRANSLATION.

*To the Reader, Greeting:—*

The reverend and very learned young man, Philip William Otterbein, from Dillenburg, in Nassau, a candidate of the holy ministry, and a teacher of the third class in this school, received of me, assisted by Cl.<sup>1</sup> Arnold, professor and first pastor of the congregation at Herborn, and by the Reverend Klingelhöfer, second pastor of the same church, on the 13th of June, 1749, the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands, that he might perform the functions of vicar, in the congregation at Ockersdorf. This I certify at his request; and to my much esteemed former hearer, who is now about to emigrate to foreign shores, I earnestly wish all good fortune and a prosperous voyage, and subscribe this letter as a testimonial of my never-failing affection towards him.

JOHN HENRY SCHRAMM,  
*Doctor of Theology and Superintendent of the Church of Nassau.*

HERBORN, February 28, 1752.<sup>2</sup>

V. THE CALL TO AMERICA.

We have seen that Mr. Otterbein's mother had a strong premonition that her son was destined to become a mis-

<sup>1</sup> "Cl." here stands as an abbreviation for *Clarissimus*, a title often prefixed to the names of German professors. The term means "most illustrious." The title might be rendered, "His Highness."

<sup>2</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 44, 45.



sionary to some foreign land. No long time was to elapse until the pious intuitions of her devout spirit were to be realized in a call for a service for which his thorough education and his eminently spiritual training, both in the home and in the school, peculiarly fitted him. The call came with great clearness and force. Never since the days of Paul was the cry, "Come over and help us," more surely the voice of God than was the earnest pleading of the destitute in the American colonies for the bread of life. And never was there a heartier or more unhesitating response than that when the cultured young Otterbein forsook the associations amid which he was reared, and where he was working with success and abundant promise of future honor, to consecrate himself, with the companions who joined him, to the work of evangelization in the New World.

The religious needs of the German settlers in America, especially in the colonies of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, had for some time been attracting the attention of the church in Europe, and limited supplies of ministers and money had been sent over for their relief. The supplies of money, however, as we shall see more fully, came from the Dutch Reformed Church of Holland, rather than from the German Reformed Church in Germany, due to the larger means of the Netherlands and the comparative poverty of the Germans. The Dutch had also been earliest on the American soil, preceding by almost a century any considerable immigration of Germans, and New Amsterdam, named for the old Amsterdam of Holland, had become a considerable city before passing into the hands of the English and becoming New York. The Dutch Reformed Church thus became one of the earliest of the Protestant churches established on American soil. The Germans did not come in any marked numbers until

the cruel hand of persecution was stretched out against them. The famous edict of Nantes, promulgated by Henry IV., in 1598, had for nearly ninety years secured a partial toleration to the Reformed Church in France. The revocation of this instrument by the cruel persecutor, Louis XIV., in 1685, on the shameless pretext that there were no longer any Protestants in France, and that its provisions were therefore no longer needed, with the increased persecutions which immediately began to follow, greatly stimulated emigration. But not only was the outflow of French Huguenots, or Calvinists, greatly augmented, until it reached by conservative estimates from three to four hundred thousand people, but the repeated devastations of the Palatinate, a middle country of the Rhine, led to the exile, first, of many thousands of Germans to other European countries, as Holland, Switzerland, and England, and subsequently of many of them to America. The evil hand of this remorseless monarch was first laid upon this peaceful district in 1674, and afterward, subsequent to the revocation, in 1688, and again in 1693. Of the Huguenots some sought refuge in Brazil, South America, others in Florida, and others in South Carolina, while others still found shelter among the colonies farther to the north. The Germans who fled from the Palatinate, after a brief sojourn in the several European countries which first gave them asylum, sought homes chiefly in the middle colonies already named. Some of them formed considerable settlements on the Hudson and in other parts of the colony of New York, but receiving ungenerous treatment by the civil government, they left again the homes they had established, and came into Pennsylvania. Settling in large numbers in Berks, Lancaster, Bucks, and others of the eastern counties of Pennsylvania, they laid the foundations of those strong German communities whose

descendants have ever since constituted so solid a portion of the best citizenship of that now great commonwealth, and who have contributed so substantially to the best bone and sinew of all the States westward. Religiously, these people were comprehended chiefly in about three denominations—German Reformed, Lutherans, and Mennonites. The Reformed were the most numerous of these, and the Mennonites the least. Singularly enough, the last named, having found a refuge first among the generous Hollanders, were presently unwelcome because they did not subscribe to the Calvinistic tenets of the Dutch church, and so they set forth again to find, on the soil of the new continent, unrestricted religious freedom—the precious boon which so many of the oppressed and persecuted in the old country so earnestly coveted. Of the Germans who were invited by Queen Anne to find refuge in her dominions, some were settled by her in Ireland, thus giving rise to the people still known as Irish Germans, while others were assisted by her in coming to America. The favorable terms proposed by William Penn to immigrants began to induce the Germans to form settlements in Pennsylvania as early as 1681, but in the first twenty years from that date the number coming into the colony scarcely exceeded two hundred families. In the next quarter of a century from forty to fifty thousand came, and twenty years later, or about the middle of the century, near the time of Mr. Otterbein's arrival, when the whole number of settlers in the colony reached about one hundred and ninety thousand, fully ninety thousand were Germans. Of these, about one-third, or about thirty thousand, were connected with the German Reformed Church. Of many of them the church connection was only nominal, as they were largely without organized societies, without houses for worship, and with-

out pastors, and adults and children alike in great numbers were unbaptized.

In this condition of things many of the settlers lapsed into spiritual apostasy, and often even into gross immorality. Many, on the other hand, preserved as best they could both the spirit and the forms of worship. The few pastors who were among them, of both the Reformed and Lutheran churches, looked anxiously across the waters, as did also many of the laity, for help. Shepherds were greatly needed to gather together into congregations these scattered sheep, and to minister to them statedly the word of life. Scarcely more than half a dozen ministers of the Reformed Church had the care of the people of their name scattered widely through the several colonies. Some of the people were served by ministers taking the oversight of several congregations, after the manner of the circuits which became so familiar later; others were visited once or twice a year by pastors leaving their own fields and making long journeys for this special service, while many were seen only at intervals of several years. It was in response to earnest appeals for help from these destitute people that the Dutch Reformed Church in Holland began to send missionaries, with money for their partial support, to the American colonies. And it should be particularly noted as something quite out of the order which we are accustomed to see, and greatly to the honor of the church of Holland, that the missionaries of whom we here speak were not sent to build up their own Dutch Reformed denomination, but to aid the German Reformed Church in caring for its scattered and needy people. Missionaries were sent as needed to their own people, but this much larger work was undertaken with large-hearted generosity purely in the interest of saving souls, while the immediate results were to be garnered by another denomination



—a people indeed of like form in organization and holding the same essential doctrinal standards, but which have to the present day maintained a separate existence, and have grown to fair proportions among the American churches, while the Dutch church has been limited in its growth largely to lines of national descent. This generous missionary work of the Dutch Reformed Church was carried on in regularly organized form, and for a series of years. The Classis of Amsterdam, and the synods of South and North Holland, had a standing committee through which appointments of missionaries were made, and for receiving and disbursing the funds which were contributed for this worthy object. Besides the contributions which were annually made, the sum of sixty thousand dollars was raised, the interest of which was applied to the erection of churches and school-houses, and to maintaining schools and supporting missionaries. It was through this generous bounty of the Netherland Christians that Mr. Otterbein was sent to the American field.

These earlier conditions of the German population of the colonies, their needs, and the part taken by the Holland church for their relief, are thus dwelt upon at length, for the purpose of presenting to the reader a more perfect understanding of the field in which Mr. Otterbein began and through the later years carried on his American work.

Here it will be in order to speak of one missionary whose name claims a conspicuous place in the early history of the German Reformed Church in America, and through whose agency Mr. Otterbein was brought across the sea, namely, the Rev. Michael Schlatter. To this man more than to any other that church is indebted, not indeed for its founding, for he was not the founder, but for the effective organization of its scattered congregations and ministers into a consistent religious body. Mr. Schlatter

was a native of St. Gall, Switzerland, at that time one of the largest of the Swiss cities, was educated for the ministry, served for some years as teacher and pastor in his native country and Holland, and afterward offered himself for the missionary work in America. He went to Amsterdam, presented himself before the deputies of the synods of South and North Holland, was accepted by them, and duly commissioned to proceed to the work. He was yet a young man, not quite thirty years of age, full of zeal and enthusiasm, and ready to enter with earnest purpose upon the work to which for forty-five years he gave his best endeavors. The duties enjoined upon him by the deputies for this first mission were chiefly those of a superintendent of the work, though he was not known by this name. He was to visit the various settlements, look up the members of the Reformed Church, organize them into societies by ordaining deacons and elders, baptize their children, administer the Lord's supper, prepare church records, and as far as possible secure for them pastors. These labors Mr. Schlatter performed with great diligence, through a series of years, traveling often long distances, preaching and laboring constantly, adding to them also, as far as he could, the duties of a settled pastor, during his earlier years, at Philadelphia. He was, in reality, in the truest sense a bishop over the Reformed Church in America, as the Rev. Henry M. Muhlenberg was, and had been for some time, among the Lutherans, and as Mr. Otterbein came to be in time among the more spiritually vitalized societies of the early United Brethren Church. Each of these men was a resident pastor while performing also these wider duties—Mr. Muhlenberg in New York, and Mr. Otterbein in Baltimore. Mr. Schlatter arrived in America for the first time in 1746. Five years later, in 1751, he returned to Holland carrying the earnest



prayers of the American churches for additional missionaries.

Mr. Schlatter, immediately on his arrival at Amsterdam, met the deputies, or standing committee, of the Dutch Reformed Synod, and laid before them at length his report of the work in America, with the prayer also for additional missionaries and further financial assistance. His report and his request were received with the warmest approval, and he was presently authorized to proceed to Germany and procure six young men, educated and consecrated, for the work, with promise of all necessary financial support. He was further instructed, however, to visit the churches in Germany and Switzerland and solicit such further help as they might be able to give for the support of the general work. The limited resources of the Reformed churches in Germany, through the impoverishment of wars and religious persecutions, strengthened the appeal to Netherland generosity; nevertheless the opportunity was thus given to the Germans to assist in the work. Mr. Schlatter went at once to Herborn, the evangelical spirit prevailing in the school doubtless attracting him there, to find the young men whom he sought. There was a ready response to his call, and the volunteers for the important mission were soon found. They were Mr. Otterbein, William Stoy, John Waldschmidt, Theodore Frankenfeld, John Casper Rubel, and one who, yielding to the entreaties and tears of his mother, withdrew after having pledged himself. His place was at once taken by a Mr. Wissler, a young man from Berg, who, with his recently married wife, gladly joined the band.

The names of these young men were presented to the faculty of Herborn for approval, which was most cordially given. Under date of February 25, 1752, the following was written by Dr. Schramm in the record of the Her-

born Academy: "Rev. Schlatter handed me the list of candidates whom he desires to take along with him to Pennsylvania, and prays that we give them a general academical testimonial. Shall they have such?" Following this the second professor of theology, Dr. Rau, wrote: "Yes. I hope there is no one that would not rather see the ministers desiring this recommendation advanced to work in a foreign land than in their home country."

And here the following will be found to possess a very special interest as a historical document. It is the testimonial of the faculty to the standing of young Mr. Otterbein, then as for several years previous a preceptor in the school, and vicar at Ockersdorf. It was written and signed by Dr. Valentine Arnold, on behalf of the faculty.

L. S.:

Inhaber dieses, der Wohl-Ehrwürdige und Hochgelehrte Herr, Hl. Philippe Wilhelm Otterbein, ordinirter Candidatus S. Ministerii, bisheriger Præceptor am hiesigen Pædagogo und nun berufener Prediger in Pensylvanien, ist am 4ten Juni, morgens zwischen 2 und 3 Uhr im Jahre 1726 zu Dillenburg, von ehrlichen, und der Evangelisch Reformirten Kirche zugethanen Eltern gebohren, und am 6ten dito zur Hl. Taufe gebracht worden. Sein Hl. Vater ist gewesen der weyl. Hochwohl Ehrwürdige und Hochgelehrte Herr, Hl. Johann Daniel Otterbein, ehemem wohlmerirter Rector der Lateinischen Schule daselbst, nachgehends aber treufleissiger Prediger bei deren Gemeinde Frohnhausen und Wissenbach, welcher am 16ten Nov., 1742, das Zeitliche mit dem Ewigen verwechselt. Die Frau Mutter ist die Hoch-Edle und tugendreiche Frau, Frau Wilhelmine Henriette, so als Wittwe noch Dato am Leben ist. Sie war eine geborne ———. Taufzeuge war Hl. Philippe Wilhelm Keller, Hochfürstl. Nassau-Dillenburgische Küchenmeister, als naher Anverwandter. Sr. Wohl-Ehrwürden ist in der Reformirten christl. Religion wohl erzogen, und hierauf zum Mitglied dieser Kirche angenommen worden, hat auch jeder Zeit einen ehrbaren, frommen und christlichen Wandel geführt, und nicht nur mit vielfältigem Predigen und treuer Verkündigung des göttl. Wortes, sowohl in dieser Stadt, als auf einem nahegelegenen hierher gehörigen Dorfe (wo er als Vicarius den hl. Dienst eine geraume Zeitlang versehen) und an andern Orten mehr geschehen, sondern auch mit seinem gottseligen Leben die Gemeinden erbaut. Weshalben wir nicht zweifeln, er werde auch der für Ihn

bestimmten Gemeinde in Pensylvanien treulich und fruchtbarlich vorstehen. Wie wir Ihn denn zu dem Ende des Allmächtigen Schutz und Geleite inbrünstig anempfehlen und Ihm zu dem wichtigen Werk, wozu Er berufen worden, und sich so bereiftfertig finden lassen, viele Gnade von Oben, und die reichsten göttl. Segen von Grund der Seelen anwünschen. So geschehen, Herborn, im Fürstenthum Nassau-Dillenburg, den 26ten Februar, 1752. V. ARNOLD,

*Professor und erster Prediger daselbsten.*

TRANSLATION.

*To the Reader, Greeting:*

The bearer of this, the truly reverend and very learned Mr. Philip William Otterbein, an ordained candidate of the holy ministry, hitherto preceptor in this pædagogium, and now called as a preacher to Pennsylvania, was born June 4,<sup>1</sup> 1726, in the morning between two and three o'clock, at Dillenburg, of honorable parents belonging to the Evangelical Reformed Church, and was baptized June 6. His father was the right reverend and very learned Mr. John Daniel Otterbein, formerly the highly esteemed rector of the Latin school at Dillenburg, but afterwards a faithful, zealous preacher to the congregations at Frohnhausen and Wissenbach, and who departed from time into eternity, November 16,<sup>2</sup> 1742. His mother is the right noble and very virtuous woman, Wilhelmina Henrietta, her maiden name being ———. She is alive at this time as a widow. His godfather was Mr. Philip William Keller, steward to the court of Nassau-Dillenburg, who was a near relative. The truly reverend Philip William Otterbein was well raised in the Reformed Christian religion, and then received as a member of this church. He has always lived an honest, pious, and Christian life; and not only by much preaching and faithful declaring of the word of God in this city, as also at a near affiliating town where he has been vicar for a considerable time, and at other places, but also by his godly life, has he built up the church. Wherefore we do not doubt that he will faithfully and fruitfully serve the church in Pennsylvania, to which he has been called. Therefore, to this end, we commend him to the protection of the Almighty, whose care and leading we pray upon him; and we pray that he may give him much grace from above, and the richest

<sup>1</sup> Attention is here again called to the date of Mr. Otterbein's birth here given, as differing from that in the baptismal register in the church at Dillenburg, which has been spoken of on page 22. If it is thought singular that Mr. Otterbein never corrected the date in this document, we must regard it as no less so that he never filled out the blank left for his mother's name. It seems likely that he hesitated to make any alteration or amendment in this paper, preferring to leave it just as it came from the hands of the Herborn faculty.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Cuno gives November 14 as the date.

divine blessing in the work to which he has been called, and to which he was so willing to go, and we wish him from the bottom of our souls success. So done at Herborn, in the principality of Nassau-Dillenburg, February 26, 1752.

V. ARNOLD, *Professor and First Pastor.*

The young men who were thus recommended were next to proceed to Holland for examination and, if approved, for special consecration to the foreign work. And now came the time for the severest trial of the devoted mother of Mr. Otterbein. The long-cherished feeling of her heart that a broader field of work was awaiting her son was about to be realized, and she could not put forth her hand to take back again the precious sacrifice which she had placed on the Lord's altar. But her deep soul was greatly moved at what seemed to her like a final parting with her beloved son. To prepare her heart for the great trial, "she hastened to her closet, and, after being relieved by tears and prayer, she came from her chamber strengthened, and, taking her William by the hand and pressing that hand to her bosom, she said: 'Go; the Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord cause his face to shine upon thee, and with much grace direct thy steps. On earth I may not see thy face again, but go.'"<sup>1</sup> The spiritual triumph of the mother in this great ordeal again gave proof of that strength of character which was to find so noble a development in the son.

The necessary preparation being completed, Mr. Schlatter started with his company of young men for the Netherlands. Arriving at the Hague, a further examination was made by the authorized committee as to their fitness for the work. It was required that they be "orthodox, learned, pious, and of humble disposition; diligent, sound in body, and eagerly desirous, not after earthly, but heavenly treasures, especially the salvation of immortal souls."

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History of the United Brethren in Christ*, p. 21.



Those who had not been duly ordained to the ministry of the word then received this rite, and all were further specially consecrated as missionaries. They were required to subscribe to the tenets of the Heidelberg Catechism, and it was expected that all missionaries sent out by the church of Holland accept the catechism in the severer interpretations put upon it by the Dutch Reformed Church. Arrangements for their necessary expenses, and for their partial support in the mission field after entering upon their work, being duly completed, the company set sail toward the close of March. The voyage was a tedious one, the vessel reaching New York as late as the night before the 28th of July, after being about four months at sea. "On the following day," says Mr. Harbaugh, in his "Life of Michael Schlatter," "they were most cordially welcomed by Rev. Muhlenberg, who, when the six young ministers were introduced to him, in view of the difficulties of the field and the labor before them, very beautifully and appropriately addressed them in our Saviour's memorable words: 'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.'"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From a serial work entitled *Monatliche Nachrichten einiger Merkwürdigkeiten vom Jahr 1752* ("Monthly Reports of Remarkable Events in the Year 1752"), published in Zurich. Mr. Harbaugh, in his "Life of Michael Schlatter," translates the following item: "MARCH. Rev. Michael Schlatter has returned again from Frankfort to Amsterdam with his cousin Christopher. As appears from a letter of Rev. Hudmaker, he has, through Rev. Prof. Arnold, in Herborn, gathered six young candidates, who are to be examined in Holland, and there dedicated to the service of the Pennsylvania churches."

The *Monatliche Nachrichten* for May, a month later, of the same year, also contained the following: "Rev. Michael Schlatter actually sailed from Holland for Pennsylvania in March. Of the six candidates whom he secured in Nassau district, one went back, yielding to the earnest entreaties of his mother. His place has, however, been filled by another from the Berg district, who, with his wife, has undertaken the journey. These candidates were all examined and ordained at the Hague. They also approved themselves by preaching trial sermons, and the whole occasion was concluded in a most solemn and edifying manner by a thanksgiving sermon from Rev. Superintendent Schlatter."—Harbaugh's *Life of Michael Schlatter*, pp. 81, 82.

We have seen that Mr. Otterbein, and probably some of the others, had already been duly ordained to the gospel ministry. But here they were especially dedicated to the missionary work in America.

## CHAPTER II

### MR. OTTERBEIN IN AMERICA

#### I. MR. OTTERBEIN'S EARLIER YEARS IN AMERICA — PASTOR AT LANCASTER.

OF the company of missionaries brought by Mr. Schlatter to America we are now to take leave, with the exception of Mr. Otterbein. This brief note, however, should be made: After remaining a few days at New York they came on with their leader to Philadelphia, and with one exception were soon located on the different charges they were to serve. Mr. Stoy was assigned to Tulpehocken, a charge which Mr. Otterbein served temporarily some years later; Mr. Waldschmidt, to Cocalico; and Mr. Frankenfeld, to Frederick City, Maryland. Mr. Rubel was located in the second church in Philadelphia, apparently without the consent of the cœtus or Mr. Schlatter. He seems to have proved "refractory," and is referred to in the records of the cœtus as "the rebellious Rubel," and three years later the minutes cease to mention his name. Of Mr. Wissler the sad fact is recorded that he died soon after his arrival, having never been installed over a charge. Mention follows a few years later of kind provision for his widow by the cœtus.

Our narrative now returns to the name which interests the reader most, the only one among the group which gained a conspicuous place in history, the name of Philip William Otterbein. The city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was at that time a thrifty town of about two thousand people. Here was located the second in importance among



the German Reformed churches in America,—the first being in Philadelphia,—and to this church Mr. Otterbein was appointed by Mr. Schlatter. From the testimony of Mr. Harbaugh, as from other sources, we learn that much laxity in morals, as well as in regard to orderly church life, prevailed in the congregation at this time. The church had been for some years mostly without a pastor, and had lapsed into unfortunate spiritual conditions. "Owing, probably, to the frequent vacancies which had here occurred during some years previous," says Mr. Harbaugh, "loose ideas and practices had come to prevail; and various irregularities, especially in regard to order and discipline, had gradually crept into the church."<sup>1</sup> The conditions of entering upon the pastorate of this church having been agreed upon, one of which provided that his service should continue for a period of five years, Mr. Otterbein entered upon the duties of the charge in about one month from the time of his landing at New York.

If we now recall the manner of his ministry at Ockersdorf and Herborn, and remember with what zeal and earnestness he there rebuked sin in high and in humble places, and urged his people to seek for a deeper spirituality, and lead purer and more exemplary lives, we shall understand how he addressed himself to the new duties that lay before him. Here was indeed a congregation less spiritual in its inner, and less orderly in its outward, life than were the churches to which he had previously ministered—churches which had been molded under the influence of the devout and saintly men who presided over the school at Herborn. And, as it might be supposed, the worldly element in the church, here as there, chafing under his trenchant rebukes, asserted itself in opposition to his spiritual and earnest preaching. But

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II., by Rev. H. Harbaugh, D.D., p. 54.

Mr. Otterbein was not to be turned aside by opposition. As a true ambassador from God, he delivered his message with unflinching fidelity, and with excellent results. Many in the church soon became strongly attached to the young pastor, and when, at the end of the five years, he tendered his resignation, intending to make a visit to Germany, the congregation was loth to let him go, and insisted upon his continuing with them. Upon their earnest pleading, and upon the intercession of the cœtus, he made an engagement to remain, reserving, however, the privilege of resigning at any time. We may remember just here that the date of Mr. Otterbein's settlement at Lancaster was twenty-three years before the beginning of the War of the American Revolution, and also that he was then just twenty-six years old.

Mr. Harbaugh, the distinguished historian of the Reformed Church, while never quite able to free himself of a degree of prejudice toward the United Brethren, though writing as late as 1857, presents some valuable materials for United Brethren history. Among these is much of what he says of Mr. Otterbein, whom he regards as misguided and erring, but for whom he nevertheless retains the highest measure of admiration. Of Mr. Otterbein and his ministry at Lancaster he says that he was "full of vigor and holy zeal," and that "he labored, during these five years, as appears from the records of that church, amid various discouragements, though with regular success."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Harbaugh further says that "at the close of the stipulated term, in 1757, he was anxious to withdraw," and then continues, quoting from another source: "He complained of many grievances, which had rendered his ministry unhappy; and demanded, as a condition of his continuance, the exercise of a just ecclesiastical

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II., p. 54.

discipline, the abolition of all inordinacies, and entire liberty of conscience in the performance of his pastoral duties. All this was readily promised by the congregation.’”

Apparently, to about this time belongs an important paper, the original of which is preserved in the archives of this early church. It is in Mr. Otterbein’s own handwriting, and its provisions indicate how earnestly he sought the spiritual improvement of his congregation. The document is signed by eighty of the male members of the church, thus showing their willingness to coöperate with him. The following translation is given in “The Fathers of the Reformed Church”:

Inasmuch as, for some time, matters in our congregation have proceeded somewhat irregularly, and since we, in these circumstances, do not correctly know who they are that acknowledge themselves members of our church, especially among those who reside out of town; we, the minister and officers of this church, have taken this matter into consideration, and find it necessary to request that every one who calls himself a member of our church, and who is concerned to lead a Christian life, should come forward and subscribe his name to the following Rules of Order:

First of all, it is proper that those who profess themselves members should subject themselves to a becoming Christian church discipline, according to the order of Christ and his apostles; and thus to show respectful obedience to ministers and officers, in all things that are proper.

Secondly. To the end that all disorder may be prevented, and that each member may become more fully known, each one, without exception, who desires to receive the Lord’s supper, shall, previous to the preparation service, upon a day appointed for that purpose, personally appear before the minister, that an interview may be held.

No one will, by this arrangement, be deprived of his liberty, or be in any way bound oppressively. This we deem necessary to the preservation of order; and it is our desire that God may bless it to this end. Whoever is truly concerned to grow in grace, will not hesitate to subscribe his name.

This excellent measure thus adopted became an established custom of the Lancaster church, and was regularly

maintained for about seventy-five years. Thus before each communion season the pastor and the people were brought face to face, giving the pastor opportunity to make inquiry concerning the spiritual condition of each, and to give such counsel or comfort as might be necessary. Mr. Harbaugh justly laments that "the good custom" was "suffered to sink out of sight," adding that "its abandonment brought no blessings to the church at Lancaster."

One more paragraph from Mr. Harbaugh, illustrating the high character of Mr. Otterbein's work at Lancaster, and the permanent results which followed, is here added: "Though the congregation at Lancaster had existed, with considerable prosperity, since 1736, it is evident that it was the labor, zeal, and influence of Mr. Otterbein which, more than those of any previous pastor, gave it consolidation, firmness, and character. Previous to his time, its history was somewhat fragmentary and weak. He was the instrument by which its strength was concentrated and made permanent. Under his ministry, the old, small wooden church, which stood in the back part of the graveyard, was superseded by a massive stone church, at the street, which was built in 1753, and only taken down in 1852, having stood almost a century. Internally the congregation greatly prospered. Evidences of his order and zeal look out upon us, from the records, in many ways; and enterprises started in his time have extended their results, in the permanent features of the congregation, down to this day."<sup>1</sup>

This noble tribute to Mr. Otterbein well illustrates alike his zeal, wisdom, and energetic spirit in caring for the spiritual and material interests of his flock. He was a young man at this time, but proved himself a wise master-builder. And it may be added that after nearly a

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II., pp. 57, 58.



century and a half has passed, and forty years after Mr. Harbaugh wrote, the Reformed Church still finds Lancaster one of the best of its strongholds, having now not only a large church membership there, but also one of its foremost literary and theological institutions.

During the pastorate of Mr. Otterbein at Lancaster there came a crisis in his religious experience which brought about a most marked change in his inner spiritual consciousness, and gave tone to all his subsequent career as a minister of the gospel of Christ. It was in the early part of his Lancaster ministry when, on a certain Sabbath morning, he preached with more than his usual earnestness and power, his whole soul and spirit being poured into his words as they fell from his lips. His theme was the necessity for a thorough repentance for sin, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a full and conscious Saviour. Many of his hearers were deeply moved by his evident sincerity and the fervency of his utterance. After the close of the service, one to whose soul his words had gone as sharp arrows anxiously approached him for spiritual counsel. Mr. Otterbein, though preaching with such potency the saving truths of the gospel, felt himself perplexed and embarrassed by this direct proof of its effects, and for the moment he could but reply, "My friend, advice is scarce with me to-day." The fact was that his earnest sermon, full of truths which he had theoretically learned and as yet but partially experienced, was but the strong outcries of his own unsatisfied soul, and he went away from his pulpit that day into the seclusion of his closet, there to struggle in prayer until the problem of a more perfect consciousness of salvation in Christ was fully solved.

That Mr. Otterbein himself regarded this entrance into a deeper religious experience as possessing an important

significance in his spiritual life, is indicated in his answer to one of a series of questions propounded to him not long before his death, by Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The particular question referred to was, "By what means were you brought to the gospel of God and our Saviour?" Mr. Otterbein's answer was, "By degrees was I brought to the knowledge of the truth, while I was at Lancaster."<sup>1</sup> But it would be a grave mistake to regard this answer as signifying that Mr. Otterbein now for the first time experienced the saving grace of the gospel. When we regard the character of his earlier preaching, both in Germany and after coming to America, his earnest and devout spirit, the purity of his life, all the trend of his ministry in public and in private, we are not permitted to come to such a conclusion. We are rather to understand that his heart longed for a more perfect apprehension, a fuller and more satisfying experience, of the things which he perceived in the gospel, and which he preached to others. This grace he now came to realize in a more precious sense, by degrees, perhaps, as he modestly expressed it, but none the less consciously. And it was his earnest preaching of the necessity for this truer spiritual experience and life, and his insistence upon it as the duty of every member of the church, that marked all his subsequent ministry as so different from that of the majority of his earlier associates.

The importance of this experience of Mr. Otterbein during his Lancaster pastorate, when viewed in the light of the results to which it led, can scarcely be correctly estimated without taking into account the spiritual comfort and strength which it brought into his own heart and life. It became to him practically the beginning of a new life. We are to take into account the general con-

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 68.



ception of the religious world at that time, that religion was largely an education. The cardinal doctrines of our faith were taught in the catechism; then followed confirmation and the stated participation in the communion of the Lord's supper. Religion pertained largely to the province of the intellect and the observance of outward forms. And when, in connection with these, the general deportment corresponded with the requirements of a pure and upright life, the man or woman so professing and living was deemed an exemplary Christian. With all this, so far as it went, there was certainly no fault to be found. But in this spiritual struggle, which Mr. Otterbein recalled in his old age in his answer to Bishop Asbury's questions, he entered into a brighter light, a deeper experience, the consciousness of new and more intimate fellowship with the divine. It was the same deeper heart regeneration which Mr. Wesley, brought up in the stately formalities of the Church of England, experienced, which made Whitefield the "burning and shining light" that he was, and which has filled the hearts of millions of others with a satisfying spiritual consciousness which no mere intellectual apprehension or faithful compliance with outward forms could ever bring. It was this experience which made Mr. Otterbein from that time forward in important aspects a new man, and which brought him later into those activities and relationships with other men of like experience that led to the organization of the United Brethren Church.

Dr. Drury, in remarking upon this stage of Mr. Otterbein's religious life, says: "If there was an earlier experience, it was yet clearly this later experience that furnishes the key to his after-life. It was this present conscious experience that he ever afterward preached as the privilege of all Christians. He believed none the less

in the outward things of Christianity and the Christian church as being important, but he believed with his whole soul that outward elements are worthless to those that do not inwardly appropriate." Dr. Drury further remarks upon the influence of this deeper religious experience upon Mr. Otterbein's preaching: "One of the results of Mr. Otterbein's enlarged liberty was a modification of his manner of preaching. Before this he had used manuscript in the pulpit; but now he had something direct, practical, experimental, to urge upon the people, and found manuscript unnecessary and calculated to trammel."<sup>1</sup> The example of this learned and gifted apostle of the gospel of Christ is commended especially to the consideration of those younger men in the ministry who are laying aside the more perfect freedom of extempore address for the narrower limitations of full manuscript discourse.

## II. IN TULPEHOCKEN, FREDERICK CITY, AND YORK.

Toward the close of Mr. Otterbein's sixth year at Lancaster, in 1758, he again pressed his resignation, intending to visit his old home in Germany, with a possibility of not returning. The resignation was reluctantly accepted, and Mr. Otterbein was looking forward to his expected journey. But Providence decreed otherwise. Further steps were yet to follow that would assure his permanent residence in America, and lead up in due time to that greater work which the great Head of the church had appointed for him. The French and English war was still in progress, and ocean travel was perilous, while disturbed conditions in continental Europe further rendered the time inopportune. He therefore resolved upon a postponement of his journey, but not wishing to remain inactive while he was waiting, he accepted the temporary oversight of

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 71, 72, 81.

the Tulpehocken charge. This charge was situated in what was then familiarly known as the Tulpehocken settlement. This settlement extended for a distance of something over twenty miles along Tulpehocken Creek, a small stream which takes its rise in Lebanon County, in the vicinity of Lebanon, and empties into the Schuylkill near Reading. The church edifice was a commodious wooden building, erected as early as 1745, and capable of seating as many as six hundred people.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Otterbein's labors, however, extended to various other congregations, as at Reading and other contiguous places, and even as far as Frederick City, Maryland. A number of these congregations being most of the time without pastors, he visited them to minister to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mr. Otterbein on this charge, as previously at Lancaster, addressed himself with much earnestness to the work of encouraging a true spirituality among the people. During the week he visited diligently the families who attended his preaching on the Sabbath, conversed with them personally on the subject of their salvation, prayed with them, and counseled or admonished them as circumstances might indicate. He also instituted week-day evening prayer-meetings—not a new form of service to him, for, as we have seen, he regularly held these meetings in connection with his work at Ockersdorf before coming to America. But to his parishioners in Tulpehocken the prayer-meeting was an innovation to be regarded with distrust, if not actually opposed. The venerable Rev. H. G. Spayth, the first historian of the United Brethren Church, whose life was in part contemporary with that of Mr. Otterbein, speaks thus of the manner in which Mr. Otterbein conducted these meetings, and of the feelings

<sup>1</sup> See Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 84, 85.

and comments of the people: "On these occasions his custom was to read a portion of Scripture, make some practical remarks on the same, and exhort all present to give place to serious reflections. He would then sing a sacred hymn, and invite all by kneeling to accompany him in prayer. At first, and for some time, but few, if any, would kneel, and he was left to pray alone. . . . After prayer he would endeavor to gain access to their hearts, by addressing them individually, with words of tenderness and love."<sup>1</sup>

It was to be expected that such labors, earnestly directed with tears and gentle entreaty, would in due time bear their legitimate fruit. When these fruits began to appear in the seriousness and contrition of some of the members of the church, others began to call in question the propriety of holding the prayer-meetings. "What," said some of them, "the preacher, and men and women kneel, and pray, and weep, and call upon God and Jesus to have mercy on them! Who ever heard of such a thing?"<sup>2</sup> To us of the present time, as to the church for a century past, the prayer-meeting, with its frequent outbursts of deep religious fervor, is so familiar a form of service, and so greatly esteemed as a means for building up believers in a true and zealous Christian life, that we can scarcely conceive of a spiritual condition so apathetic and lifeless as that which then prevailed so broadly among the professing followers of Christ. But Mr. Otterbein's faithful labors among these people were greatly blessed, and in due time his earnest labors in the pulpit and among the people gained for him their warmest affection. It was indeed a most interesting spectacle—this young, talented, and cultured minister going about among these simple-hearted people with unwearying diligence

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History of the United Brethren Church*, pp. 23, 24.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.



and a high resolve to secure for them their best spiritual good, dealing with plain but loving severity with the wayward, and with tenderest and gentlest regard for all. Mr. Harbaugh, the German Reformed historian, speaking of this period, says that great blessing rested upon his labors.<sup>1</sup>

The thoroughly evangelical methods of Mr. Otterbein at this early stage of his work in America, alike in Lancaster and in Tulpehocken, pointed with prophetic finger toward results in which, when they were realized, he rejoiced as men rejoice in the harvest, but of which at the time he had not the most distant conception. It could not be otherwise than that in time these truly spiritual methods would arouse opposition among some who were his associates in the divine calling, but who did not share his deep inward spiritual experience. But let us of the present be grateful that Mr. Otterbein, bringing the prayer-meeting with him from his home in Germany, thus early introduced it among his parishioners in America, and that he engrafted it into the institutions of the Church which in time he founded. Its value to the Church has been above estimate. The successors of the men who then disapproved his methods have happily adopted the same form of service, and its usefulness is attested by the practice of nearly all Christian denominations.

Rev. John Lawrence, in his *History of the United Brethren Church*,<sup>2</sup> in referring to the oppositions encountered by Mr. Otterbein and his manner of meeting them, says: "We have seen that pastors, preachers, and people, not a few, were found who did not relish these meetings for prayer, but opposed them as an innovation, and persecuted those who attended them. In answer to these

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II., p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Published in 1860-61. Vol. I., pp. 148, 149.



opponents, such passages of Holy Scripture as the following were introduced by Mr. Otterbein: 'O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker' (Ps. 95: 6). 'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: . . . for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people' (Isa. 56: 7). 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father.' 'I will therefore that men pray everywhere' (Paul). 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name' (Jesus). 'Which are the prayers of the saints' (Rev. 5: 8; 8: 3). Nevertheless, this *kneeling* in prayer, and these meetings *especially* for prayer and religious conference, on week days and evenings, met with much violent opposition, and from none more decided and bitter than from those who, from their sacred and holy calling, should have been prepared to give them their hearty and undivided support." Mr. Spayth, remarking further upon the agency of these prayer-meetings in bringing about the reformation in which Mr. Otterbein was the principal figure, forcibly says, "This truth is most strongly attested by witnesses on earth and saints in heaven; and it remains yet to be proven, whether the reformation of the world can be prosecuted with any degree of success, or a church, however well established, maintain her vitality, continue a light to the world, and be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, in the absence of these meetings as secondary means of grace."

In the fall of the year 1760, Mr. Otterbein transferred his labors from Tulpehocken to Frederick City, then called Fredericktown, Maryland. This was in answer to a second call from the congregation in Frederick, a previous call having been extended to him in 1759. The second call was accepted under the pressure of a special urgency by the congregation, the cœtus, and the

synods in Holland. By reason of more remote location the service of temporary supplies could be secured only with difficulty, and this fact was pressed to induce Mr. Otterbein to accept. The disturbed conditions of the country on account of the war not being yet quieted, he seems to have postponed to an indefinite time his cherished purpose to visit his home in the Fatherland. He was not a stranger to the people in Frederick, having visited them several times to supply their need while they were without a pastor. His pastorate in Frederick extended through a period of five years.

To these people, as elsewhere, Mr. Otterbein came as a burning and shining light. He preached the plain truths of the gospel with great urgency, insisting upon a thorough conversion of the heart, a consciousness through the Spirit's witness of present salvation, and the testimony of a pure and godly life. Many of the people received his words gladly, and there is ample evidence that his ministry in Frederick was in a high degree successful. Nevertheless, there were the worldly and sinful in the church, some of them influential, to whom his close requirements proved a most serious offense, and who, while they had joined pressingly with others in inviting him to become their pastor, afterward raised a mutiny against him, carrying for a time a majority of the congregation with them. These men, after the manner of the Pharisees, who prided themselves on being the children of Abraham, and on a strict observance of the outward forms of the law, held that having been baptized, and receiving statedly the communion of the Lord's supper, nothing further was required to entitle them to the name of Christian. The rigorous arraignment of such men, trusting in the outward formalities of worship, leading unspiritual and even ungodly lives, aroused in them the

spirit of bitter opposition. They were angered under his searching sermons, and would not endure the strict discipline which he sought to enforce. Their behavior in this was in striking contrast with that of the people at Lancaster, who, after having chafed for a time under the same type of ministry, afterward gladly assented to the things which Mr. Otterbein required as conditions of his remaining with them, and finally parted from him with deep and affectionate sorrow.

An incident narrated by Mr. Lawrence illustrates the temper of these ungodly members of the church in Frederick: "At one period the excitement became so great that a majority of the church determined on his summary dismissal; and, to effect it most speedily, they locked the church door against him. On the following Sabbath, when the congregation assembled, his adherents, knowing that he had a legal right to the pulpit, were disposed to force the door; but he said to them: 'Not so, brethren. If I am not permitted to enter the church peaceably, I can and will preach here in the graveyard.' So saying, he took his stand upon one of the tombstones, proceeded with the regular introductory services in his usual fervent spirit, delivered a sermon of remarkable power, and, at its close, announced preaching for the same place on the succeeding Sabbath. At the time appointed an unusually large concourse assembled, and as he was about to commence the services again under the canopy of the heavens, the person who had the key of the church door hastily opened it, saying: 'Come in, come in! I can stand this no longer.'"<sup>1</sup> Mr. Otterbein doubtless remembered at this time how the Saviour forewarned the apostles that they should be cast out of the synagogues,

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ*, Vol. I., pp. 178, 179.

and also that the Lord himself had a like experience in his own city of Nazareth, with comforting reflection on his words: "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord." Dr. Drury, remarking on this incident, observes that while among the Germans so deplorable a religious condition existed, things were not any better among the English, and recalls that only ten years before this Jonathan Edwards, in New England, was dismissed from his church at Northampton, and that John Wesley preached from his father's tombstone at Epworth, the door of the church being closed against him.

Among the substantial proofs of the success which attended Mr. Otterbein's labors at Frederick, notwithstanding these oppositions, may be mentioned the fact that during his pastorate the congregation built a new house of worship. Of this enterprise Dr. Drury remarks: "Mr. Otterbein's labors at Frederick were much blessed. In 1763 the congregation began to build a large and substantial stone church, to take the place of the former log structure, or possibly of a church that had succeeded the original log church. The next year the house was nearly enough completed to be used for worship. The building was subsequently remodeled, and was at a later time rebuilt, but the original stone tower, still standing, shows that, for those early days, the building was of a superior character. In 1762 a stone parsonage was erected, the lot having been purchased the preceding year."<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1847 the centennial of the founding of this congregation was observed, and the Rev. Dr. Daniel Zacharias, who was its pastor from 1835 to 1873, preached

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, 1884, pp. 100, 101.



the centennial sermon. In referring to the building of this church and parsonage, and also to the affectionate regard which Mr. Otterbein continued to cherish for the congregation after he had removed to another field of labor, Dr. Zacharias says: "During Mr. Otterbein's labors in Frederick, the church in which we now worship was built; also the parsonage which has been the successive residence of your pastors ever since. Many other improvements in the external condition of this congregation were likewise made during this period; thus showing that Mr. O. was not only a very pious and devoted pastor, but was also most energetic and efficient in promoting the outward prosperity of the church. A few letters are still preserved in our archives,<sup>1</sup> written by Mr. O. while at York, to members of this charge. From these letters, brief as they are, you may easily gather the spirit of the man. Though laboring now in another field, he remembered still, with affectionate kindness and concern, the people whom he had recently left. He mourned over their difficulties, and endeavored to profit them by imparting unto them his godly counsels, and offering up in their behalf his earnest prayers."

During the five years of his pastorate at Frederick Mr. Otterbein received pressing calls to go to other places, as Reading, Oley, and Philadelphia. The church in the latter city was especially urgent in pressing its request. Four letters of Mr. Otterbein relating to this call remain in the archives of that church. They appear in Dr. Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, all of them written in 1763.

It was also during his pastorate at Frederick that Mr. Otterbein was married. His bride, Miss Susan LeRoy, was of French Huguenot descent. Her ancestors had

<sup>1</sup> These letters, Dr. Drury remarks, can no longer be found. *Life of Otterbein*, p. 101.



fled from France to Switzerland on the revocation of the edict of Nantes, by Louis XIV., in 1685, when four hundred thousand of the best citizens of France sought refuge in other countries, and in 1754 her father with his family came to America, settling, soon after their arrival, in Lancaster, just two years after Mr. Otterbein became pastor in that city. The marriage took place on the 19th of April, 1762, the Rev. William Stoy officiating. Mr. Otterbein was at this time nearly thirty-six years of age, and Miss LeRoy twenty-six. The period of Mr. Otterbein's married life was of brief duration, Mrs. Otterbein dying on the 27th of April, 1768, just six years after the marriage. Mr. Otterbein cherished the memory of his young bride with the tenderest affection to the end of his long life. Dr. Drury recalls "a beautiful tradition that only two days before his death he requested a friend to bring a pocket-book, made by the tender hands then so long motionless in death, and that gazing upon the carefully preserved keepsake, he kissed it with all the fondness of a youthful lover."<sup>1</sup> The dates of the marriage of Mr. Otterbein and of the death of Mrs. Otterbein were discovered by Dr. Drury in the venerable records of the Lancaster Reformed church.

Toward the close of his five years' pastorate at Frederick, Mr. Otterbein accepted a call from the church at York, Pennsylvania, and in September, 1765, he removed to that place. The church at York had been organized at an early day, and had become large and influential. His connection with this church continued until 1774, when he resigned to assume the pastorate of the newly organized independent Reformed church in Baltimore.

Three events of special interest occurred during his residence at York. One of these was the death of his

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, p. 112.

beloved wife, in April, 1768, as has already been seen. Her remains were conveyed to Lancaster, the home of her people, for interment. A second was his first meeting with Martin Boehm, a man whose life work was to be thereafter so intimately associated with his own. This meeting will be spoken of further on. The third was the fulfillment of his long-cherished desire to visit his old home in Germany.

The voyage to Germany was undertaken in April, 1770. The time for the visit was auspicious. The wars in America had been ended, and peace prevailed in Europe. Mr. Otterbein expected to return to America, and so did not resign his charge at York, his congregation being served meanwhile by supplies. His visit continued perhaps a little over a year. It was now eighteen years since he had left his home in Germany to become a missionary to America. Happily, time had made no further change in the family circle than the wider distribution of some of its members to various places of ministerial service. His mother, his brothers, and perhaps his sister, were all living. All the brothers were honored pastors, except John Charles, who spent his entire life as a professor in Herborn, and with whom the aged mother resided. The meeting again, after so many years of separation, and especially with the beloved mother, must have presented tender and affecting scenes, and many an interesting story of life in the New World, as related by the *Americaner*, must have enlivened conversation.

A most interesting incident occurred, illustrating the new spiritual life which some of the brothers—history does not inform us whether we may say all—had experienced. George Godfrey, residing at Duisburg, was probably the first of the brothers whom Mr. Otterbein met on his arrival in Germany. Of this meeting Dr. Drury says:

"After the first welcome salutation and the evening meal, the brothers, in the privacy of the study, unfolded to each other their most intimate thoughts. Philip William, without reserve, and with a full heart, related the story of his spiritual experience. George Godfrey listened with the deepest attention, and rising from his chair embraced his brother, and as the tears streamed down his cheeks said, 'My dear William, we are now, blessed be the name of the Lord, not only brothers after the flesh, but also after the spirit. I have also experienced the same blessing. I can testify that God has power on earth to forgive sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness.'"<sup>1</sup> Dr. Drury also records a tradition that on his visiting his oldest brother, John Henry, at Burbach, he preached for him on a very hot Sunday afternoon for two hours in his shirt sleeves, thus proving that he could preach as well without the customary gown as with it, or appear even in the simplest habit, and that he did not think two hours too long for the delivery of an important message to a congregation. The followers of this learned and great divine who begin to weary under a sermon as soon as the hand on the dial passes the thirty-minute mark should ponder this fact.

During the period of his residence at York Mr. Otterbein continued to make frequent visits to other points to bear the gospel to others who hungered for the word, engaging in what would now be called missionary or evangelistic work. Many of these visits were made to churches unsupplied with pastors; others to neighborhoods where no churches were built. It was on one of these visits that he first met his future eminent colaborer, of whom the next chapter will treat.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, p. 123; also *Unity Magazine*, Vol. III., No. 1.

## CHAPTER III

### OTTERBEIN AND BOEHM

#### I. MARTIN BOEHM.

THE name of Martin Boehm, whose memory must ever occupy an honored place in United Brethren history, has already appeared in these pages. On account of the prominence he gained in the great revival movement and in the subsequent organization of the Church, as well as from the fact that the people among whom he was for many years a greatly esteemed minister contributed a considerable number to the early adherents of the Church, a sketch of his conversion and call to the ministry will here be in place.

We have already seen that among the Protestant Germans who, toward the close of the seventeenth century, forsook their homes in the old country to escape persecution and enjoy the blessings of religious freedom, were large numbers of Mennonites.<sup>1</sup> The earlier arrivals of 1683 were followed by steadily increasing numbers until in 1735 as many as five hundred families were found in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, alone, while many others found homes in other counties of that State, as also in Maryland and Virginia.

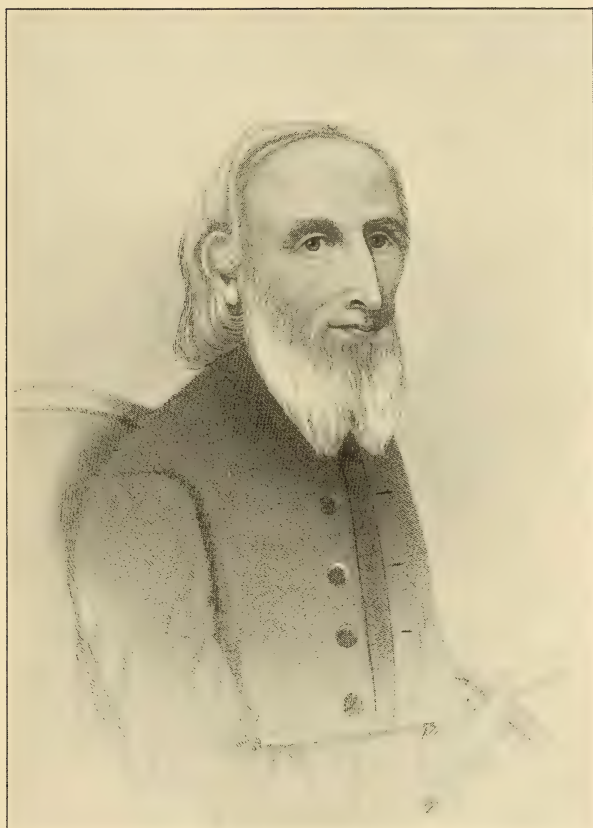
This larger exodus was stimulated in part by the persecutions to which the Mennonites were subjected in Europe, alike in Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, on the part of other Protestants, on account of their peculiar views and practices, which prevailed among some of the

<sup>1</sup> P. 34.



numerous parties into which they were divided. Adhering in the main to the tenets of Menno Simonis, the most distinguished leader among them, and whose name they adopted, they lived lives of great simplicity, especially as regarded dress, the severe plainness which still characterizes their descendants in all the branches into which they are divided being rigorously insisted upon. In religious practice and in their relations to the state they sought to observe a simple and severe discipline, rejecting a paid clergy, declining to hold civil office, and refusing to take oaths or go to war. Infant baptism they regarded with decided aversion. In general, they sought to reintroduce, according to their conception of it, the type of the apostolic church life. In America these characteristics are, among the most of these people, under their various names, still preserved, the civil ballot, that highly prized privilege of citizenship, being also declined. In common with the people of other churches the early Mennonites in America lapsed into religious formalism, laying much stress on outward forms and observances, notably giving rigid attention to matters of dress, thus substituting a severe externalism for the true inward spiritual life, while, however, an exemplary morality in the affairs of daily life was carefully insisted upon. The exterior life of these simple-hearted people could not but commend them to the favorable regard of their fellow citizens. It will be noted that in many things they bore a marked similarity to the Friends, or Quakers, with whom many of them, by their residence in William Penn's colony, were brought into close relations. But with the almost universal low condition of spirituality which prevailed among them, it became an occasion of surprise, and sometimes of alarm, and even anger, when their members found their way to a better religious life





MARTIN BOEHM.



and made declaration of the fact. It was among these people that Martin Boehm was born.

The family of Mr. Boehm was of Swiss origin. His great-grandfather, Jacob Boehm, was well connected, and was a strict member of the Reformed Church. His son, also named Jacob, having completed his apprenticeship to a trade, was sent forth for the usual three years' service as a journeyman. During his absence from home he fell in with the Pietists,<sup>1</sup> and, approving heartily their religious views and warm spiritual life, he attached himself to them. On returning home, making known his changed views and his new religious experience, he was met with the utmost indignation. The pastor of the church publicly denounced him, and his family joined in the angry opposition to him. He was arraigned and convicted of heresy, and upon an older brother was laid the duty of conducting him to jail. Possibly the brother's heart relented somewhat against the cruel and unnatural proceeding. At any rate, he seems to have so far relaxed his vigilance that the prisoner found a way to escape. The boundary line of France being not far distant, the convicted heretic was soon beyond the Swiss jurisdiction,

<sup>1</sup> Pietism, under the vigorous direction of Spener, was a reaction, toward the close of the seventeenth century, against the orthodox formalism of the Lutheran Church in Germany, which had gradually supplanted the more earnest spirituality of the earlier Lutheranism. As important religious movements are liable to do, it fell into some excesses that brought against it bitter opposition, and even persecution. But from the small circle which at first met stately in Spener's study, during his pastorate at Frankfort, it grew gradually into an irresistible movement, gaining at first a foothold, and afterward a real triumph, in Leipzig University, while the University of Halle, then newly founded, became the home of the movement. Spener himself was advanced in position, becoming court preacher at Dresden, where by his speaking and writing he pushed forward with the energy of a true revivalist-reformer the work which had so deeply enlisted his heart. The movement became popular with the masses, and assisted greatly in restoring a better spiritual life to Germany, until the rising tide of rationalism began to chill and beat back the new spiritual forces. The school of Tübingen, in its earlier days, was chiefly based on the principles of Pietism. Consult *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia*, Art. "Pietism."

and proceeding along the Rhine he found a home in the Palatinate, where he became associated with the Mennonites. His residence here was made permanent, and here he married and reared a family. One of his sons, also named Jacob, the third in the line bearing the name, came to America in 1715, and found a home, with others of his church people who had come before him, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Here he was married not long after to Miss Kendig, a most worthy young woman, also of the Mennonite faith, and of this union was born on November 30, 1725, Martin Boehm, the youngest of several children. Jacob Boehm was a blacksmith by trade, and it is related of Mrs. Boehm, as illustrating her sturdy strength, that when he was without assistance in his shop, she not unfrequently assumed the duties of a helper at the bellows and anvil. Jacob Boehm was a devout Mennonite, and, like his father before him, was a deacon in his church.

The opportunities for education in America in the early part of the seventeenth century were few, and Mr. Boehm's education was accordingly limited, being mostly received in the home, in the German language. But he possessed, happily, a vigorous mental, as well as physical, constitution, a clear grasp of ideas, and sound judgment, was gifted with a graceful and easy flow of speech, and had a pleasing personal bearing which would make him naturally a favorite. Later in life he acquired a fair knowledge of the English language, with ability to converse with ease, and became possessor also of a number of English books. His father being a devout Mennonite, and, as we have seen, an officer in the church, Mr. Boehm was brought up as a true son of the church. Possessing all these qualities, it is not surprising that when a vacancy occurred in the pulpit of the local church of which the Boehms were members,

the thoughts and hearts of the people should have turned toward this gifted and pious young man in their own midst. The method of choosing a minister among the Mennonites was by lot. They remembered the example of Joshua in dividing to the people by lot their inheritance in Canaan, that of Samuel in casting lots in choosing the first king of Israel, and that of the eleven apostles casting lots to fill the vacancy caused by the defection of one of their number, and also the scripture which says that "the lot is cast into the lap, but the ordering thereof is of the Lord." Accordingly, when, after due nominations had been made, and much earnest prayer, the lot was cast for a successor in the pulpit of this early congregation, we can easily understand that the hearts of the people were filled with gladness when they saw that the choice fell upon the promising and beloved young Martin Boehm.

Mr. Boehm was at this time in his thirty-third year, just a little past the age at which Jesus and John the Baptist began their ministry. He had married, in 1753, Miss Eve Steiner, who, like himself, was of Swiss ancestry and of the Mennonite Church. She is described as a "noble woman," and "justly loved and esteemed."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Drury remarks that the parents of Mr. Boehm "spent their last days with him, and from them he inherited the beautiful home farm"; also that "the father died in 1780, rejoicing in the truths into which the ministry of his son Martin was the means of leading him." Of his personal appearance Dr. Drury says, "He is described as being a short, stout man, with a vigorous constitution, an intellectual countenance, and a fine flowing beard, which gave him, in his later years, a patriarchal appearance."

Whether Mr. Boehm ever saw Mr. Otterbein previous

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 130.



to his own call to the ministry, and his remarkable spiritual experience which followed, cannot now be known. Residing in the same county in which Mr. Otterbein was pastor, it is not improbable that he knew of him. But as the Mennonites, from their experience with the Reformed and Lutherans in the old country, would naturally be somewhat shy of them in the new, there is no likelihood that Mr. Boehm ever visited Mr. Otterbein's church in Lancaster, and it is certain that Mr. Otterbein did not form Mr. Boehm's acquaintance until many years after the latter became a minister.

Mr. Boehm's conversion presented an interesting illustration of the manner in which the Holy Spirit moved upon the hearts of men in different churches and in different localities, independently of any personal contact of those who were thus affected. We have already seen that Mr. Otterbein was deeply moved by the divine Spirit impressing upon his own heart the precious import of the Scripture truths which he preached to others, and also that while he was thus affected he felt unprepared to give spiritual counsel to one who came to him to inquire. We are now to see that Mr. Boehm, when he was called to become a minister, felt that he had no message for his people until by the power of the same Spirit which directed his call he was made a new man in Christ. Under these circumstances he found himself presently under the greatest embarrassment and mortification. Again and again, according to the custom of his church, he arose to add an exhortation, after an older minister had preached, and found himself able only to stammer out a few incoherent sentences. He read diligently the Scriptures, that he might have something to say, but when the trial came his memory would not call up a single passage, and he was obliged to sit down

in confusion. Some months passed in this way, with only failure to reward his efforts, and he began to be in despair. To be a preacher and have nothing to say he felt to be a deep reproach. Yet he did not doubt that he was genuinely called to the work of the ministry, because the church had laid its hand upon him after the divine order as understood by his people. He believed also fully in the efficacy of prayer, and he availed himself earnestly of this refuge of troubled souls. While he was thus engaged, he tells us, the thought presented itself to him as though one had audibly spoken, "You pray for grace to teach others the way of salvation, and you have not prayed for your own salvation." This thought clung to him day by day until he felt himself to be a poor, lost sinner. His agony, he says, now became very great. One day, he continues, when he was plowing in the field, he knelt down at each end of the furrow to pray. The word *lost*, *lost* (*verlohren*), went with him every round. At length, midway in the field he could go no farther; he sank down by his plow, and cried, "Lord, save; I am lost!" Then came to him the answer, "I am come to seek and to save that which is lost." His heart took hold of these precious words of the mighty Saviour; and "in a moment," he says, "a stream of joy was poured over me." Thus as a result of prolonged struggle, and in answer to unceasing prayer, there came into his heart the blessing of an unutterable peace.

Mr. Boehm, after this blessed experience, at once left his plow in the field, and proceeded to his house to tell his wife the joyful news. Now he found too that his tongue was loosened. With the emancipation of the heart came liberty of utterance. The live coal from the altar which touched the prophet's lips inspired his lips also with a new-found eloquence. And now, while

before he had wished the Sabbath far away, he wished it were already here. When the day came, and the elder brother had preached, he arose and told his experience. He felt that he now indeed had a message to deliver. To the people it was as novel as to him it was joyful. Many, as they listened to his story, were deeply moved, and attested their feeling with weeping. On the following Sabbath, as he was speaking, his soul was aflame with his theme, and soon he found himself in the midst of the congregation, while the people about him were weeping aloud.<sup>1</sup>

To see this plain, simple-hearted young man, who before had been so reserved and unable to speak connectedly even a half dozen sentences, now suddenly stand forth with rich gifts of speech, with scripture ready to support every utterance, and with power to sway the hearts of the people in a manner they had never before witnessed, occasioned among his listeners the profoundest surprise. It was as when the people of Nazareth wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of the mouth of a young man of their own city, whom they had known as a humble carpenter among them, or when the apostles on the day of Pentecost spoke with power of interpretation that startled the doctors of the law and astonished all their hearers. But we will let Mr. Boehm himself tell of this in his own simple way, as translated by Mr. Spayth: "This caused considerable commotion in our church, as well as among the people generally. It was all new; none of us had heard or seen it before. A new creation appeared to rise up before me and around me. Now scripture before mysterious, and like a dead letter to me, was plain of interpretation, 'was all spirit, all life [*alles Geist und Leben*].' Like a dream, old things had passed away, and it seemed as if I had awoke to new life,

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, pp. 30, 31.

new thoughts, new faith, new love. I rejoiced and praised God with my whole heart. This joy, this faith, this love, I wished to communicate to those around me, but when speaking thereof, in public or in private, it made different impressions on different persons. Some gave a mournful look, some sighed and wept, and would say, 'Oh! Martin, are we indeed lost?' 'Yes, man [*der Mensch*] is lost! Christ will never find us till we know that we are lost.' " Mrs. Boehm, he tells us, was the next lost sinner to feel that she was saved and to experience the same love and joy of assurance.

Mr. Spayth, who personally knew Mr. Boehm in his old age, and greatly admired him for the qualities of his character, as well as for his invaluable service in the Church, thus continues: "It was a rich treat to hear this father in Israel tell of his call to the ministry; how he shrank from it when proposed, and how it resulted in his finding Jesus, the lost sinners' friend, and the joy he felt when the burden of sin was taken away. Of this he loved to speak in his old age, and would recur to it with an animation peculiar to himself. To see his eyes light up, and his whole countenance assume for the time a youthful appearance, in contrast with his snowy locks and rich white beard, was a sight a pen dipped in liquid light could not describe. . . . 'Now I am,' he would say, 'a *servant* and a *child* of God. When this took place, I knew of no one who had felt and enjoyed the sweet influence of the love of God in the heart but Nancy Keagy, my mother's sister. In our family connection and in her immediate neighborhood she was known as a very pious woman, and she was pious.' This is the Martin Boehm, *chosen of God*, to whom, second to William Otterbein, the rise of the United Brethren Church is justly due."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, pp. 30, 31.



From the time of Mr. Boehm's conversion he began to preach the necessity of a thorough regeneration of the heart. He was listened to by many with sincere pleasure and profit. His declaration of the doctrine of the new birth found acceptance with some, and they entered into the same experience with him. Others regarded his preaching with doubt, and apprehended unfavorable results to follow what appeared to them as unwarrantable zeal or even fanaticism. Nevertheless, in the following year, 1759, he was advanced to the rank of a chief pastor, or bishop, as the office of a full pastor among the Mennonites was called.

## II. MR. BOEHM IN VIRGINIA.

Mr. Boehm continued to preach with much fervor, and with evident fruits following, the doctrines of a true conversion and spiritual life to his own congregation. But it was not long until, like Mr. Otterbein, he found occasion to make visits elsewhere, and preach to others of his own denomination the same precious truths of the gospel. The first of these visits of note was made to some Mennonite settlements in what was then called New Virginia. From 1750 onward there was a considerable emigration from Pennsylvania across Maryland into the inviting valley of the Shenandoah River. Among these people were numerous Mennonite families, and among them some of Mr. Boehm's relatives. About the year 1761 much religious interest was awakened among these pioneer settlers, the particular occasion being the advent among them of some of George Whitefield's converts, who preached the doctrine of a conscious present salvation. The Mennonites in the valley were not yet organized into congregations, and were without preaching by ministers of their own church. Some of them became seriously affected by the



new teaching which they heard, and were greatly perplexed about what they should do. In this condition of affairs they resolved to send to Pennsylvania for some minister of their own people, who should give them the counsel they needed. Their request was brought to Lancaster County, and to Mr. Boehm's church. On the advice of his brethren, Mr. Boehm responded to their call. Nothing could have been more opportune. He was the messenger whom God had especially fitted to carry instruction to a people whose hearts were ready to receive it. The Ethiopian treasurer inviting Philip to join him in his chariot and expound to him the Scriptures, the centurion of Cæsarea sending to Joppa for Peter, and these people in the new settlements of the Shenandoah sending for Boehm present parallel instances of the Holy Spirit's touching the heart for the reception of truth and then sending the chosen man to declare it. The results of Mr. Boehm's visit to these people were most profitable, and no less so to himself in the added impulse that was given him to follow out new lines of evangelistic work among the people of his denomination, such as Mr. Otterbein was following among his.

To present a glimpse of the character and spirit of Mr. Boehm's work in this region a page or two from the account of Mr. Spayth, who heard from his own lips the story of much of his work, is here transcribed. Frequently persons were found who were in the deepest spiritual distress, but unable to find any one who could intelligently assist them in their gropings for the light. Among these was a daughter of a Mr. Keller, a Mennonite, who heard one of the "new lights," as they were called, preach. She was brought under deep conviction for sin, and her parents, kind and sympathetic, but knowing nothing beyond the outer formalities of religion, were not

able to assist her. "Oh, my heart, my heart is sick," she exclaimed; "God is displeased with me. O my father, what shall I do? I am lost! Oh, is there no mercy for me?" The best reply she received was: "You are not lost. God loves you. '*Mercy!*' What do you mean by mercy? You are not wicked—never were. You are a believer. Come, now; no more crying. Why? wherefore do you weep?" These words were repeated to her often, but there was no one to pray with her, or point her to the Saviour.

"At this crisis," says Mr. Spayth, "Boehm arrived. After salutations had passed and refreshments had been taken, Boehm, in conversation with Keller, inquired how matters stood in religion. Keller replied, 'Most of us are doing well, but some new doctrine has of late been preached by men hereabout which has caused some disturbance among us.'

"And what do those men preach?" inquired Mr. Boehm.

"What they preach is rather more than I can tell you, but it is different from what we have ever heard. Our daughter, about two months since, was to their meeting, and has not been like herself since.'

"And for two months she has been to no preaching?" asked Mr. Boehm.

"No; we could not think of letting her go, and have wished she had never heard those people. And, as we have written you, there are others of our people just like her, melancholy and dejected, and all we can get them to say is, 'We are lost [*verlohren*]; we have no true religion'; and for this reason we have sent for you, believing that they would be advised by our own preachers, and dismiss their gloomy thoughts.'

"And where is that daughter of yours?" again inquired Mr. Boehm.

“‘Why,’ answered the mother, ‘there you see she is, and has not spoken a word to any of us to-day.’

“Boehm said he now moved his chair by her side, and sought to draw from herself the state and exercises of her mind. She listened to him for some time in silence, breathing at intervals a deep sigh. Soon the fountain of her tears was opened again, and she began to weep aloud, saying, ‘Is it possible that you a stranger know what I have felt and suffered for weeks, and you believe that I am a sinner, that I am lost?’

“‘Yes, I know this, my daughter; but I know Jesus came to seek and to save that which is lost; and he is come to find you and to save you to-night yet. Do you believe in Jesus?’

“‘Yes, I believe there is Jesus Christ; but have I not offended him? Will he not come and judge the world and me? Oh, that he would but save me!’

“‘Come,’ said Boehm, ‘we will kneel down and pray.’ They kneeled down. The agony of Miss Keller was great. She cried, ‘Lord, save or I perish!’

“‘Yes,’ said Boehm, ‘hold to that; he will save, and that speedily.’ And so it was. She was blest, and all her sorrow was gone—dissolved in joy.

“Seeing this, her mother cried out, ‘Martin, Martin! what have you done? Why did you come? What will become of us now?’

“‘Yes,’ replied her husband, ‘what will become of us? We, too, are lost!’

“That night,” continues Mr. Spayth, “was a night of mourning and a night of joy for that house, for the morning light found them all rejoicing in the love of God.”

The further results of this visit of Mr. Boehm were the spiritual enlightenment and happy conversion of many

more of the people in whose interest he had come. The fact of the conversion of this family, with the story that Mr. Boehm was preaching a doctrine which they as Menonites had not before received, was soon told among the people of his name. A wonderful awakening followed, with precious and enduring fruits. But to Mr. Boehm himself the visit proved of the greatest practical consequence. It was to him a deepening and broadening of experience. His own conviction of the truths he was preaching was greatly intensified, and he felt himself strengthened as he had not been before for the declaration of the doctrine of a conscious new birth. But we will let Mr. Spayth tell us further:

“As before remarked, this coming of his [Mr. Boehm] at this time was of great importance to himself. It was learning a lesson of experience from the great Master, which he could not so soon, nor so effectually, have learned at home. Hence we can well fancy with what feelings, with what inspired thoughts and hopes, he returned to his own. Timidity and the fear of offending his elder brethren, he said, were much removed. He was confirmed in the truth and correctness of his own experience. He became satisfied that men everywhere must repent, and that this repentance must be accompanied by a godly sorrow, deeply felt; and that there can be no rest, no peace, no hope, and no faith without it. He further remarked, with much earnestness, that after his return he felt ‘an impression or a presentiment that God would visit his people and give them repentance unto life.’ He had news to tell his friends at home of what he had witnessed in Virginia; that there, too, he found and saw persons, some young and some advanced in life, who felt themselves *lost*, some of whom had nearly despaired of obtaining grace and mercy, believing themselves the chief of sinners;



that many had been blest, and rejoiced in Jesus Christ their Saviour before he left. He could tell them how affecting their parting was—what sympathy, what brotherly love, what melting of hearts! He never had witnessed such scenes in his life before, the simple relation of which carried conviction to some at the time of his return home. This year, as well as the two years following, were years of joy to Brother Boehm. . . . God was with him, and he did not preach without effect. . . . Pungent convictions extorted the cry, 'Lost,' which were followed by happy conversions."

Mr. Boehm found himself impelled, like Mr. Otterbein, to extend habitually his labors to other fields beyond the limits of his own neighborhood and congregation. He visited other churches of his own people, preaching to them the same doctrines relating to repentance, the forgiveness of sin, and a conscious present salvation, as he preached to the people of his own charge, and as he had preached on his visit to Virginia. And similar results everywhere followed. Men and women were brought under deep conviction for sin, and earnestly sought pardon and salvation through Jesus Christ. And everywhere the people expressed their astonishment at his preaching, and at the manifest tokens of God's power among them through the Holy Spirit. All was a new revelation, alike to people in the church and out of it, and numbers found the salvation he declared. And all this could not come to pass without also in time arousing opposition on the part of the unspiritual and worldly in the church, as will be more fully seen farther on. Many of those who were thus converted under Mr. Boehm's preaching were of the number who were afterward gathered into the United Brethren Church, after an organization had been effected.



## III. MEETING OF OTTERBEIN AND BOEHM.

It is now time that we see the first meeting of these two eminent evangelists, Otterbein and Boehm. It is from fourteen to sixteen years since, in 1752, Mr. Otterbein came to America, and became pastor of the Reformed church in the city of Lancaster. And it is from eight to ten years since Mr. Boehm, in 1758, was chosen to be minister in the Mennonite church in his own neighborhood in Lancaster County. We have seen that each of them, after a special baptism of the Holy Spirit, began to preach, with greatly increased definiteness and enlarged power, the Scripture truths relating to a conscious salvation in Christ; and also that, with the new spiritual fervor that burned in their own hearts, they felt themselves impelled to go beyond the limits of their own parish boundaries that they might proclaim a clearer light and a precious present salvation to others of their brethren. Each, however, was content to limit his labors chiefly to the people of his own church, and such as were allied to them, or might come voluntarily within the sphere of their influence. Mr. Otterbein was now pastor of the Reformed church at York, Pennsylvania, and Mr. Boehm continued as pastor, or bishop, in the nomenclature of his denomination, of the Mennonite society to whose service he was first chosen, in Lancaster County.

Mr. Boehm, like Mr. Otterbein, exhibited much activity in this wider preaching of the word, and the meeting at which the two met was held by his appointment. The date was Whitsuntide in 1766, 1767, or 1768. The year cannot now be fully determined. Dr. Drury, in his *Life of Otterbein*, after considering the question somewhat exhaustively, places the limit of time as not earlier than 1766, nor later than 1768, with a preference for the later date. The place of meeting was the farm of Mr. Isaac

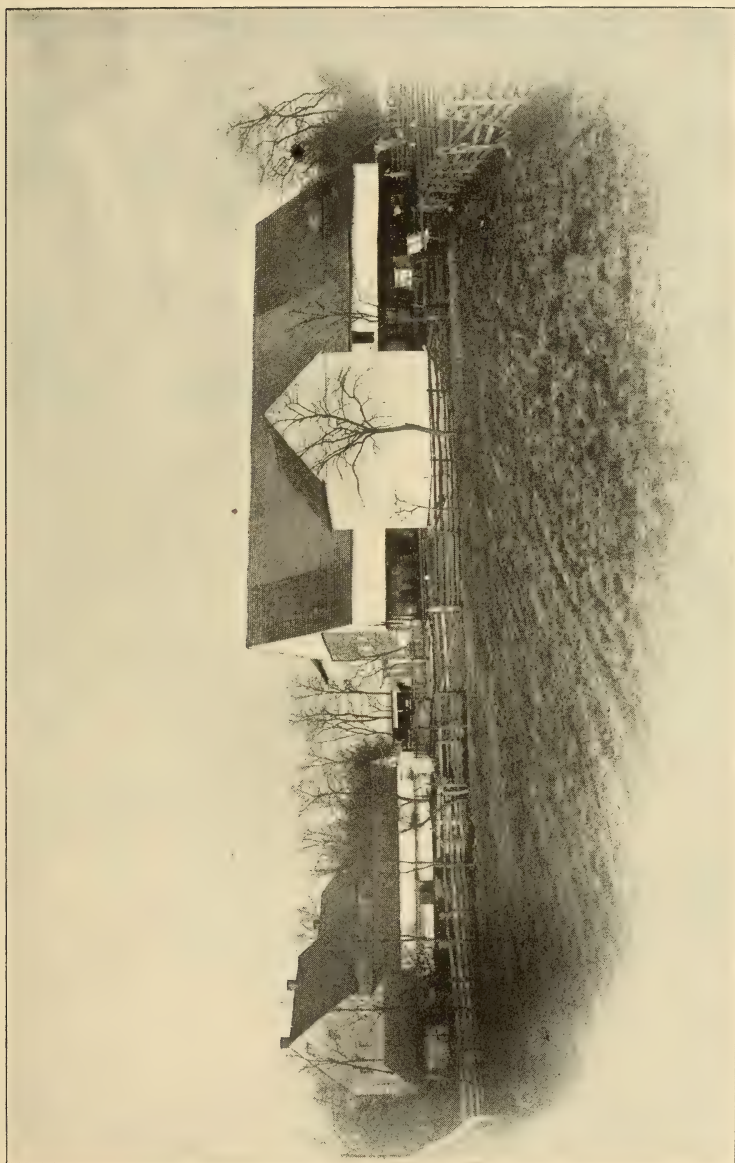
Long,<sup>1</sup> in a Mennonite neighborhood, in Lancaster County, and the building in which the principal meeting was held was Mr. Long's barn, a large structure, capable of accommodating a numerous congregation. The people assembled in great numbers, from Lancaster, York, and Lebanon counties, too many for all to find room in the barn, and an overflow meeting was held in the orchard. At this meeting were present several ministers, among them the "Virginia preachers," as they were called, lay preachers, who came from the settlement in Virginia which Mr. Boehm had previously visited. One of these addressed the overflow meeting in the orchard. Mr. Otterbein came from York for the purpose of attending the meeting, but whether by invitation of Mr. Boehm, or wholly of his own accord, is not now known. The meeting was called *eine grosse Versammlung*, "a great meeting," a name commonly applied to like assemblages then and down to much later days. The term "big meeting," for a protracted or revival meeting, is still familiar in some parts of the country.

At this meeting Mr. Boehm preached, while Mr. Otterbein sat beside him a deeply interested listener. As Mr. Boehm proceeded with his discourse, his heart glowing with spiritual fervor, Mr. Otterbein's soul kindled with responsive feeling. The great burning truths which Mr. Boehm proclaimed were the same which he had himself long been accustomed to declare, and he felt that there indeed stood before him a fellow apostle of the same gospel which was mighty to save, a true brother in the ministry of Christ's word. When Mr. Boehm ceased, and before

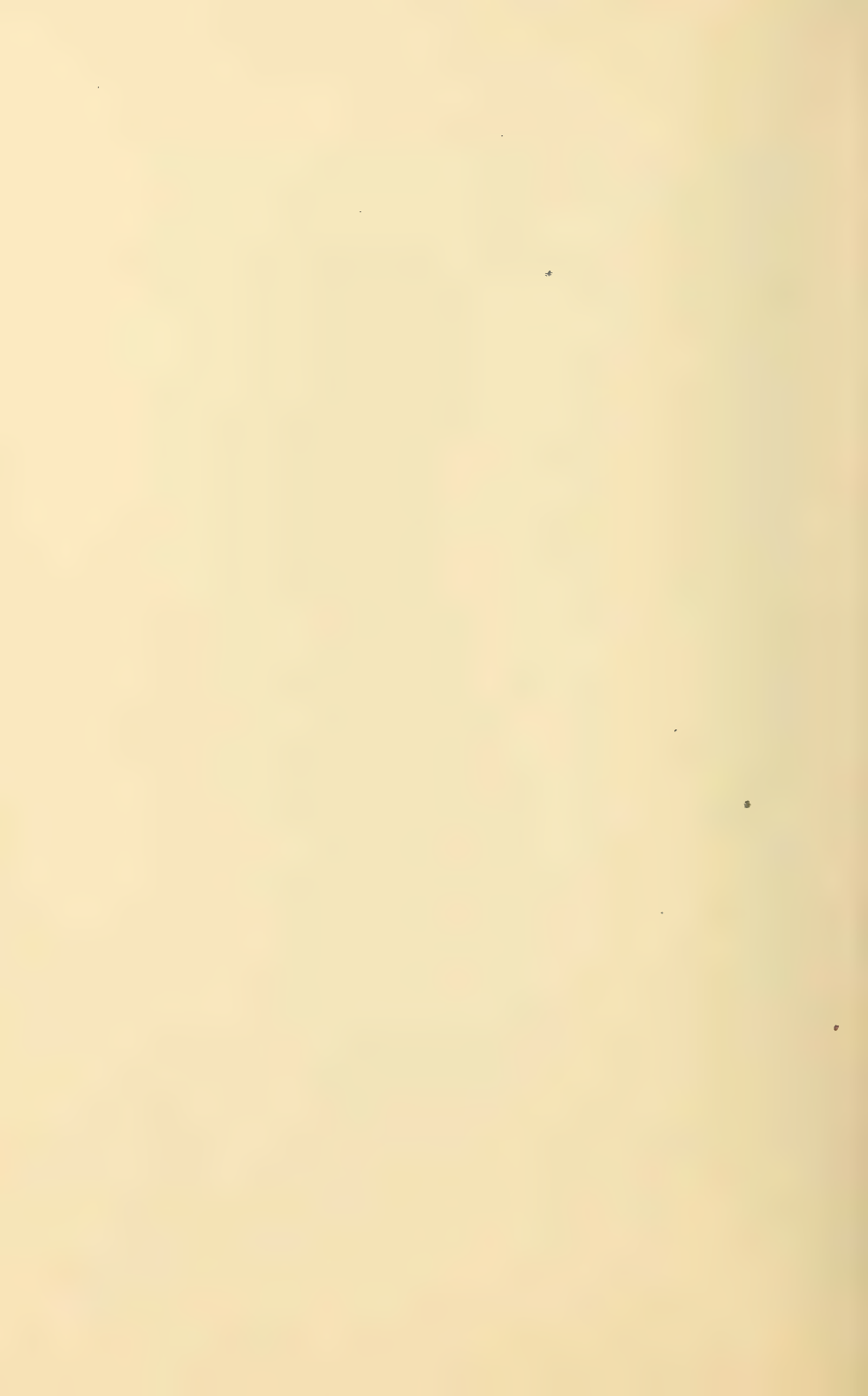
<sup>1</sup>According to Rev. M. J. Mumma, in the *Watchword* of February 1, 1896, there were three brothers named Long,—Isaac, John, and Benjamin,—all of them men of excellent character, and members of the Mennonite Church. Some of their descendants still reside in the same neighborhood and adhere to the faith of their ancestors, being esteemed as most worthy people in their church.

he had time to sit down, Mr. Otterbein arose, and with a heart filled to overflowing, cast his arms about Mr. Boehm in warm embrace, and exclaimed, "*Wir sind Brüder*"—"We are brethren." The incident was a most remarkable one, truly dramatic and impressive, and presenting contrasts of striking character. In personal appearance and bearing there was the greatest unlikeness. Mr. Boehm, as we have already seen, was of rather short stature, plain and simple, though pleasing and effective, in speech, and attired in the severely plain garments peculiar to his people. Mr. Otterbein, on the other hand, was tall, of noble and commanding presence, and bearing the marks of elegant culture. But with these differences of birth and education, they were under the higher dominion of the one divine Spirit, and their thoughts and hearts flowed together as one. Much historical significance has been attached to this incident, as it is thought to have suggested the name of the Church when, years later, it was brought to actual organization.

The participants in this meeting were Mennonites, Reformed, Lutherans, and others, all moved by the same Holy Spirit, which had brought them a new birth in Christ Jesus. The early traditions indeed have it that something more was done in the way of promoting union than simply joining together in a feast of spiritual fellowship in Christ, though this was a most blessed end gained in a period when church lines were most sharply drawn, and when, especially between Mennonites and Reformed, there was but little recognition of even the outward amenities which distinguish people of different churches at the present time. Dr. Drury, in speaking of this meeting, says, "The feature deserving of the most abiding remembrance in connection with this meeting is that Otterbein, Boehm, and the Virginia preachers present



ISAAC LONG'S BARN.





are said to have formed a union, with some simple but definite conditions as its basis.”<sup>1</sup> One of these conditions was liberty in the practice of baptism. It will be remembered that the Reformed Church practiced infant baptism, the mode in all cases being sprinkling, while the Mennonites baptized only adults, the mode being by pouring. The “Virginia preachers,” if they were the followers of Whitefield’s converts, Whitefield being of the Church of England, may have held to infant baptism, and to sprinkling as the preferred mode. The services at these meetings, it should be remembered, were conducted exclusively in the German language.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> The barn in which this memorable meeting was held is described by Dr. Drury, in his *Life of Otterbein*, as built of stone, one hundred and eight feet long, and of corresponding width, and contained on the floor above the basement six apartments, some for storage purposes only, others for thrashing. The barn is still standing, as is also the original residence, located in the rear of the later building seen in our engraving. Rev. M. J. Mumma, who visited the place recently, writes that from a date on the barn it is thought to have been built in 1754. The masonry is of a high order. The thatched roof of early times has given way long since to a better covering. The building appearing in the foreground is a later structure. The location is a beautiful farm, six miles northeast of the city of Lancaster.

## SECOND PERIOD—1774-1800

### CHAPTER IV

#### MR. OTTERBEIN CALLED TO BALTIMORE

##### I. A NEW ERA IN MR. OTTERBEIN'S LIFE.

WE have seen in the preceding pages how the Lord prepared two men with special endowments of grace for a broader work than that to which their ordinary calling led them. Both these men, for some years unacquainted with each other, were, through the strong impulse of the divine Spirit, led forth to proclaim to others besides the people of their own congregations, in more definite terms, the doctrine of the new birth and a deeper spiritual experience. This true evangelistic work was followed with much gracious fruit. Many who heard them listened at first with surprise, then with gladness, to this new evangel. But we are now to trace again more definitely the course of the more eminent of the two distinguished leaders of the movement, Mr. Otterbein.

The year 1774 marked an era of the greatest importance in the work of Mr. Otterbein. He was now to enter upon the pastorate of an independent congregation, in the city of Baltimore, to remain in its service during the rest of his life, a period extending through about thirty-nine and a half years. The position assumed by this church at its organization, and permanently maintained afterward, and the relation it subsequently sustained to the movement which culminated in the formation of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, justify here a somewhat detailed statement of its history.

## II. THE REFORMED CHURCH IN BALTIMORE.

The first German Reformed church in Baltimore was organized about the year 1750, but a regular pastor was not secured until in 1760. This period of ten years was coincident with that of Mr. Otterbein's service in Lancaster and Tulpehocken, and during this time he made occasional visits to this church to supply in part its necessities. His earnest and spiritual preaching to its people was the sowing of seed which was to bear valuable fruit afterward. A goodly number of the members accepted gladly the gospel of a true spiritual life, and these came to be known as an evangelical party in the church. This number was materially increased by the removal into the city of persons who had been converted under Mr. Otterbein's preaching at other places. About the year 1770 the congregation became involved in serious difficulty on account of their pastor, Rev. John Christopher Faber. Mr. Faber was the first pastor of this church, having served it since 1760. It is said of him that his ministrations were formal and languid, and, what was much more serious, that he "led an offensive life." He did not during this time, nor until 1774, hold connection with the Reformed synod, having, on his arrival from Germany, taken charge of the congregation in an irregular manner. The converted portion of the congregation listened to his preaching and accepted from his hands the sacraments of the church with little pleasure. The time came at last when they earnestly sought for a change of pastors. But, being in a minority, their wishes were disregarded by the larger number, who, on the principle of "like people, like priest," determinedly adhered to the incumbent pastor.

In some manner now not quite apparent, Rev. Benedict Schwope, a Reformed minister preaching near Baltimore,

became involved in the strife. Mr. Schwope first appears as an elder in the Reformed church at Pipe Creek, Maryland, 1763, and as early as 1754 his name is found on the church list at York. In 1770 he was an applicant for ordination before the cœtus. Mr. Faber laid against him the charge of fomenting the trouble in his congregation. The issue, according to Mr. Harbaugh, was laid before the cœtus. A committee of investigation was appointed, who, after careful inquiry, failed to sustain Mr. Faber, but did sustain Mr. Schwope. The latter was then received into membership in the cœtus and regularly ordained.<sup>1</sup> A statement of these facts concerning Mr. Schwope is important here, since he appears in the following year as the leader and first pastor of that part of the congregation which became afterward for so many years Mr. Otterbein's church. He was also chiefly instrumental, in connection with Francis Asbury, afterward Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in inducing Mr. Otterbein to accept the pastorate of this church.

### III. A NEW CONGREGATION ORGANIZED.

The crisis came in 1771. The failure to secure a change in the pastorate led to the withdrawal of the evangelical party from the Reformed church. Having settled upon the course they would pursue, they called Mr. Schwope to become their pastor, and soon afterward purchased several lots for the purpose of building a church. The ground secured is situated on Conway Street, Howard's Hill, and is that upon which the old historic brick church still stands, erected during Mr. Otterbein's pastorate, in 1786. A frame house sufficient for the immediate needs of the congregation was built soon after the purchase of

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II., p. 390.

the ground, to be succeeded later by the more substantial edifice. The title to this ground was not vested in the German Reformed Church, or trustees representing the church, but in chosen members of the congregation, with power of transmission to their successors. The form of this trust was, toward the middle of the present century, challenged in a tedious contest in the civil courts, but after thorough and exhaustive inquiry, was fully and finally confirmed. The clear and definite purpose of this form of investiture was that of maintaining the independence of the congregation and the freedom of its property from the ownership or control of the German Reformed Church.

The cœtus of the Reformed Church made earnest and praiseworthy, but unsuccessful, efforts to bring about a reconciliation between the now divided sections of the original body. In the year 1771, according to an official paper in the archives of the Otterbein Church, at a session of the cœtus at Reading, Pennsylvania, deputies of both parties were present, and with the consent of the cœtus agreed upon the dismissal of Mr. Faber, which was accordingly done, and also to call unitedly a preacher from the cœtus. The call was extended to Mr. Bluhmer, but declined, and the cœtus decided to send to the church a minister who was expected to arrive soon from the Synod of Holland. The majority, or old church section, however, did not wait for the coming of the expected minister, but hastily chose a Mr. W. Wallauer, who had meanwhile arrived, though unsent, from Holland. Mr. Wallauer proved even less acceptable than Mr. Faber, and so the trouble was in no degree mollified. The version thus given is that of the official record in the Otterbein Church, and is presumably Mr. Otterbein's understanding of the matter. It is due to say that another version, differing from this somewhat, represents that Mr. Faber and Mr.



Schwoppe were both to resign, and that Mr. Schwoppe's people declined to permit him. In 1772 no progress was made toward reunion. In 1773 Mr. Schwoppe desired to resign, and a call was extended to Mr. Otterbein, which he declined. The request continued to be pressed, and Mr. Otterbein finally consented upon the condition of the approval of the *cœtus*. This body, at its session of 1773, did not favor his acceptance, and the delegates of both parties then agreed to call Dr. Hendel; or, if Dr. Hendel should decline, the two parties were to unite in selecting another minister from the *cœtus*. The old church refused to ratify this agreement, and the effort to secure harmony was again a failure.

#### IV. MR. OTTERBEIN ACCEPTS THE PASTORATE.

In the spring of 1774 Mr. Otterbein was again urged to accept the pastorate of the new congregation. This time, after due consideration, he consented, notwithstanding the action of the *cœtus* the year before. The *cœtus*, feeling that its action had not been fully regarded, expressed, at the fall session of the same year, a mild disapproval.<sup>1</sup> The request of the congregation was this time supported by a personal letter to Mr. Otterbein by Francis Asbury, who had arrived in America in 1771, and now resided in Baltimore. Mr. Asbury had not yet met Mr. Otterbein, but had heard from Mr. Schwoppe an account of his evangelical work. Their life-long friendship was begun at this time. This letter was dated February 2, 1774. A minute referring to this appears in Mr. Asbury's Journal, as follows: "On Saturday Mr. S. came to consult me in respect to Mr. O.'s coming to town. We agreed to promote his settling here, and

<sup>1</sup> For a full presentation of this part of the history the reader is referred to Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 155 ff.

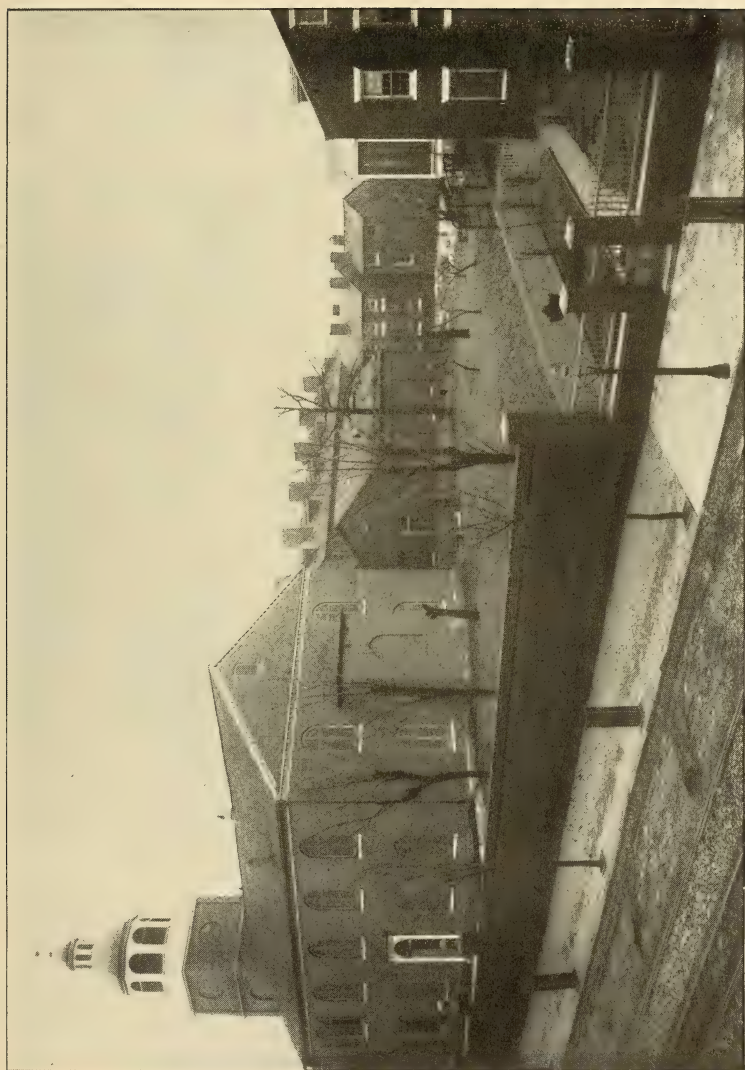
laid a plan nearly similar to ours—to wit, that gifted persons amongst them who may, at any time, be moved by the Holy Ghost to speak for God, should be encouraged, and that if the synod would not agree, they were still to persevere in the line of duty.” The principle involved had already been in practice by Mr. Schwope himself—that of unordained men appearing in the pulpit as preachers of the word. Mr. Asbury at this time, and for a number of years afterward, remained unordained, and regarded himself as a lay preacher. To this unordained class for a series of years belonged most of the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal and United Brethren churches alike. Mr. Otterbein, however, was not lacking in this respect, having been duly ordained, as we have already seen, three years before coming to America, by the laying on of hands, according to the authorized forms of the German Reformed Church.

## CHAPTER V

### THE OTTERBEIN CHURCH IN BALTIMORE

#### I. THE OTTERBEIN CHURCH FORMALLY ORGANIZED.

MR. OTTERBEIN took charge of the congregation in Baltimore on May 4, 1774. He had now been in America twenty-two years, and was nearly forty-eight years of age. He was in the full vigor of his mature manhood, and brought his splendid powers to the service of this church in a time of suffering and trouble. The growth of the church was not rapid, and the War of the Revolution breaking out soon afterward, there were many barriers to its more speedy enlargement. The German population of the city was at that time small, the entire number of the inhabitants, of all nationalities, being not over six thousand. During the long and wearisome period of the war but few German immigrants came to America, and those who came mostly sought homes in the country districts. After the close of the war more favorable conditions gradually set in, and in the year 1785 the congregation, now somewhat increased in numbers, effected a full and formal organization, and adopted a series of rules for its own government. These rules, which, after so long a lapse of time, have acquired much historic interest, are dated January 1, 1785, and are officially signed by Mr. Otterbein, as pastor of the church, and by the elders and trustees. The rules are preceded by a historical statement which possesses a permanent interest, and is therefore here presented with them. As the rules were drawn up by Mr. Otterbein, it is fair to assume that the preamble was



OTTERBEIN'S CHURCH, BALTIMORE.





OTTERBEIN'S CHURCH AND TOMB IN 1897.

Tomb.



also from his hand. Its historical accuracy, though some of its points have been disputed, we therefore rest with Mr. Otterbein, preferring to take his affirmation rather than that of any on the opposite side of the controversy of that time. The translation from the original document in the German language was made by Rev. H. G. Spayth. The paragraph "Article 14" is the transcript of a minute in the proceedings of the cœtus of 1775, at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, where Mr. Bucher, the secretary, was then pastor.<sup>1</sup>

THE CHURCH BOOK OF THE EVANGELICAL  
REFORMED CHURCH.<sup>2</sup>

HOWARD'S HILL, BALTIMORE.

*In the Name of the Triune God: Amen.*

In the year 1771 there stood in the Reformed church in Baltimore a preacher by the name of Faber; but forasmuch as said Faber was not in fellowship with the Reformed preachers in Pennsylvania, that is, he was not a member of the cœtus of Pennsylvania, and likewise led an offensive life, a division took place in this church. In the month of October of the said year, the said Reformed preachers met in Reading, Pennsylvania, where deputies from both parties of this divided church attended. Here it was resolved to dismiss said Faber, which was done.<sup>3</sup> Both parties agreed now, unitedly, to call a preacher from the cœtus, and to offer this call to Mr. Bluhmer. This was done, but the call was not accepted by him. The cœtus now resolved to send to the Baltimore church a preacher from among the four who, at that time, according to letters from Holland, were on their

<sup>1</sup>Rev. John Conrad Bucher was a pastor greatly beloved by his people. He died suddenly, at an advanced age, at a wedding at Annville, five miles from Lebanon, his body being borne on a bier carried on the shoulders of some of his parishioners, at the head of a sorrowing procession, to his home in Lebanon. On his tombstone at Lebanon his name appears simply as Conrad Bucher, the same as in our minute, being abbreviated as Mr. Otterbein commonly did his name to "William," omitting "Philip." See *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Harbaugh, Vol. II., p. 115.

<sup>2</sup>The name "Evangelical Reformed Church" was the title taken by the congregation.

<sup>3</sup>This has reference to the pastoral charge of the congregation, and not the cœtus. Of the latter he did not become a member until 1774, and so could not have been dismissed from that body at the earlier date. See *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II., p. 400.

way, and now daily expected. In the meantime there came to Pennsylvania W. Wallauer, whom the Synod of Holland had not sent. The opposite party, without saying a word to the other party, contrary to the agreement and the resolve of the *cœtus*, brought him away, and received him as their preacher. But at the next *cœtus*, which was held in the year 1772, deputies from both parties attended; and the *cœtus* protested against Wallauer<sup>1</sup> and the conduct of his party, and declared that they could take no further notice of them. Scarcely any hope being now left of a reunion, the remaining members of this church found themselves under the necessity of looking about for another preacher, and of forming a church for themselves. A call was made to William Otterbein, who then stood in the Reformed church in York; but he refused because of the disorganized condition of the congregation; but, after repeated solicitations, he expressed a willingness to accept, provided the *cœtus* should give consent. At the next *cœtus*, deputies from both parties appeared again, and, before a final action was taken in the matter with Otterbein, a union took place, and William Hendel was proposed as preacher, to which the deputies of both parties consented. But, a few days after the return home of the deputies, the opposite party rejected the proposition, and all to which their deputies had pledged themselves. The division was now greater than at any former period. The prospect of a reunion entirely vanished, and the members of this church, who had before addressed William Otterbein, saw the absolute necessity of forming a church for themselves, and they gave Otterbein a new call, which he finally accepted; and subsequently, in the year 1775, it was, by the *cœtus* held in Lebanon, confirmed.

Article 14: After due consideration, the *cœtus* deems it proper [good] that Domine Otterbein continue in his pastoral office. From report it appears that his labors are blest, and the opposing party cease the strife.

CONRAD BUCHER, *Sec. pro tem.*

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Harbaugh speaks of Mr. Wallauer as coming to America in 1771, "without any recommendations from the Fathers," that is, from the Synod of Holland, "in consequence of which *cœtus* did not receive him." He says that he succeeded Mr. Faber in Baltimore, in 1772, and according to a letter from the *cœtus* to Holland, dated May 2, 1776, he had then left Baltimore; and, further, that, according to other testimony, he had left his congregation to join the British army. All of this harmonizes with the record in the "Church Book" of the Otterbein congregation, and statements from other sources as to his unfitness for the pastorate. It is worthy of remark that the account given by Mr. Harbaugh of both these men, Mr. Faber and Mr. Wallauer, is in no sense flattering and in no way out of agreement with what is said in the "Church Book." The memoir of Mr. Faber is dismissed with five brief lines. See *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, pp. 399, 400.

## CHURCH BOOK.

William Otterbein came to Baltimore May 4, 1774, and commenced his ministerial work. Without delay, and by the help of God, he began to organize a church, and, as far as it was possible for him, to bring it within the letter and the spirit of the gospel. Such disciplinary church rules as were needful, were therefore from time to time adopted, made known, and the importance of keeping them earnestly enjoined.

But the afflicting and long-continued war, and the dispersion, on account of the same, of many of its members into the interior of the country, prevented those rules from being written in a book for their preservation.

But through and by the goodness of God, peace and quietness being restored, and the gathering together of former members, with a considerable addition of new members, the church finds herself at this time considerably increased. Therefore, it is unanimously concluded and ordained by the whole church, to bring the constitution and ordinances of this church into the following form, which we hold as agreeing with the Word of God; and for their permanency and perpetual observance, herewith record and preserve:

1. By the undersigned preacher and members who now constitute this church, it is hereby ordained and resolved, that this church, which has been brought together in Baltimore by the ministration of our present preacher, W. Otterbein, in the future consist of a preacher, three elders, and three trustees, an almoner, and church members; and these together shall pass under and by the name, "The Evangelical Reformed Church."

2. No one, whoever he may be, can be preacher or member of this church whose walk is unchristian and offensive, or who lives in some open sin. (I. Tim. 3:1-3; I. Cor. 5:11-13.)

3. Each church member must attend faithfully the public worship on the Sabbath day, and at all other times.

4. This church shall yearly solemnly keep two days of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, which shall be designated by the preacher—one in the spring, the other in the autumn, of the year.

5. The members of this church, impressed with the necessity of a constant religious exercise, suffering the word of God richly and daily to dwell in them (Col. 3:16; Heb. 3:13; 10:24, 25), resolve that each sex shall hold meetings apart, once a week, for which the most suitable day, hour, and place shall be chosen, for the males as well as the females; for the first, an hour in the evening, and for the last an hour in the daytime, are considered

the most suitable. In the absence of the preacher, an elder or trustee shall lead such meetings.

The rules for these special meetings are these:

(a) No one can be received into them who is not resolved to flee the wrath to come, and, by faith and repentance, to seek his salvation in Christ, and who is not resolved willingly to obey the disciplinary rules which are now observed by this church for good order and advance in godliness, as well as such as in the future may be added by the preacher and church vestry; yet always excepted, that such rules are founded on the Word of God, which is the only unerring guide of faith and practice.

(b) These meetings are to commence and end with singing and prayer; and nothing shall be done but what will tend to build up and advance godliness.

(c) Those who attend these special meetings but indifferently, sickness and absence from home excepted, after being twice or thrice admonished, without manifest amendment, shall exclude themselves from the church.

(d) Every member of this church should fervently engage in private worship, morning and evening pray with his family, and himself and his household attend divine worship at all times.

(e) Every member shall sedulously abstain from all backbiting and evil-speaking of any person, or persons, without exception, and especially of his brethren in the church. (Rom. 15:1-3; II. Cor. 12:20; I. Pet. 2:1; Jas. 4:11.) The transgressor shall, in the first instance, be admonished privately; but the second time he shall be openly rebuked in the class-meeting.

(f) Every one must avoid all worldly and sinful company, and to the utmost shun all foolish talking and jesting. (Ps. 15:4; Eph. 5:4-11.) This offense will meet with severe church censure.

(g) No one shall be permitted to buy or sell on the Sabbath, nor attend to worldly business, or to travel far or near, but each shall spend the day in quietness and religious exercises. (Isa. 58:13, 14.)

(h) Each member shall willingly attend to any of the private concerns of the church, when required to do so by the preacher or vestry; and each one shall strive to lead a quiet and godly life, lest he give offense, and fall into the condemnation of the adversary. (Matt. 5:14-16; I. Pet. 2:12.)

6. Persons expressing a desire to commune with us at the Lord's table, although they have not been members of our church, shall be admitted by consent of the vestry; provided that nothing justly can be alleged against their walk in life, and more especially when it is known that they are seeking their salvation. After the preparation sermon, such persons may declare themselves openly before the



assembly, also, that they are ready to submit to all wholesome discipline; and thus they shall be received into the church.

7. Forasmuch as the difference of people and denominations ends in Christ (Rom. 10 : 12; Col. 3 : 11), and availeth nothing in him, but a new creature (Gal. 6 : 13-16), it becomes our duty, according to the gospel, to commune with, and admit to the Lord's table, professors, to whatever order or sort of the Christian church they belong.

8. All persons who may not attend our class-meetings, nor partake of the holy sacrament with us, but attend our public worship, shall be visited, by the preacher, in health and in sickness, and on all suitable occasions. He shall admonish them, baptize their children, attend to their funerals, impart instruction to their youths; and, should they have any children, the church shall interest itself for their religious education.

9. The preacher shall make it one of his highest duties to watch over the rising youth, diligently instructing them in the principles of religion, according to the Word of God. He should catechise them once a week; and the more mature in years, who have obtained a knowledge of the great truths of the gospel, should be impressed with the importance of striving, through divine grace, to become worthy recipients of the holy sacrament. And in view of church membership, such as manifest a desire to this end should be thoroughly instructed for a time, be examined in the presence of their parents and the vestry, and, if approved, after the preparation sermon, they should be presented before the church, and admitted.

10. The church is to establish and maintain a German school, as soon as possible; the vestry to spare no effort to procure the most competent teachers, and devise such means and rules as will promote the best interests of the school.

11. That, after the demise or removal of the preacher, the male members of the church shall meet, without delay, in the church edifice, and, after singing and prayer, one or more shall be proposed by the elders and trustees. A majority of votes shall determine the choice, and a call shall be made accordingly; but should the preacher on whom the choice falls decline the call, then as soon as possible others shall be proposed, and a choice made. But here it is especially reserved, that should it so happen that before the demise or removal of the preacher his place should already have been provided for, by a majority of votes, then no new choice shall take place.

12. No preacher shall stay among us who is not in unison with our adopted rules, and order of things, and class-meetings, and who does not diligently observe them.



13. No preacher can stay among us who teacheth the doctrine of predestination [*Gnadenwahl*], or the impossibility of falling from grace, and who holdeth them as doctrinal points.

14. No preacher can stay among us who will not to the best of his ability care for the various churches in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, which churches, under the superintendence of William Otterbein, stand in fraternal unity with us.

15. No preacher can stay among us who shall refuse to sustain, with all diligence, such members as have arisen from this or some other churches, or who may yet arise, as helpers in the work of the Lord, as preachers and exhorters, and to afford unto them all possible encouragement, so long as their lives shall be according to the gospel.

16. All the preceding items shall be presented to the preacher chosen, and his full consent thereto obtained, before he enters upon his ministry.

17. The preacher shall nominate the elders from among the members who attend the special meetings, and no others shall be proposed; and their duties shall be made known unto them, by him, before the church.

18. The elders, so long as they live in accordance with the gospel and shall not attempt to introduce any new act contrary to this constitution and these ordinances, are not to be dismissed from their office, except on account of debility, or other cause. Should an elder wish to retire, then in that case, or in case of removal by death, the place shall be supplied by the preacher, as already provided.

19. The three trustees are to be chosen yearly, on New-year's day, as follows: The vestry will propose six from among the members who partake with us of the holy sacrament. Each voter shall write the names of the three he desires as trustees, on a piece of paper, and when the church has met, these papers shall be collected, opened, and read, and such as have a majority of votes shall be announced to the church, and their duties made known unto them, by the preacher, in the presence of the church.

20. The almoner shall be chosen at the same time and in the same manner as the trustees, and at the next election will present his account.

21. The preacher, elders, and trustees shall attend to all the affairs of the church, compose the church vestry, and shall be so considered.

22. All deeds, leases, and other rights concerning the property of this church, shall be conveyed, in the best and safest manner, to this church vestry, and their successors, as trustees of this church.

23. Should a preacher, elder, or trustee be accused of any known

immorality, and upon the testimony of two or three credible witnesses the same should be proven against him, he shall be immediately suspended; and, until he gives sure proof of true repentance, and makes open confession, he shall remain excluded from this church. The same rule shall be observed and carried out in relation to members of the church who shall be found guilty of immoral conduct. (I. Cor. 5 : 11-13; I. Tim. 5 : 20; Tit. 3 : 10.)

24. All offenses between members shall be dealt with in strict conformity with the precepts of our Lord. (Matt. 18 : 15-18.) No one is, therefore, permitted to name the offender, or the offense, except in the order prescribed by our Saviour.

25. No member is allowed to cite his brother before the civil authority, for any cause. All differences shall be laid before the vestry, or each party may choose a referee from among the members of the church, to whom the adjustment of the matter shall be submitted. The decision of either the vestry or referees shall be binding on each party; nevertheless, should any one believe himself wronged, he may ask a second hearing, which shall not be refused. The second hearing may be either before the same men, or some others of the church; but whosoever shall refuse to abide by this second verdict, or, on any occasion, speak of the matter of dispute, or accuse his opponent with the same, excludes himself from the church.

26. The elders and trustees shall meet four times in the year; namely, the last Sabbath in March, the last Sabbath in June, the last Sabbath in September, and the last Sabbath in December, in the parsonage-house, after the afternoon service, to take the affairs of the church into consideration.

27. This constitution and these ordinances shall be read every New-year's day, before the congregation, in order to keep the same in special remembrance, and that they may be carefully observed, and no one plead ignorance of the same.

28. We, the subscribers, acknowledge the above-written items and particulars as the groundwork of our church, and we ourselves, as co-members, by our signatures, recognize and solemnly promise religious obedience to the same.

WILLIAM OTTERBEIN, *Preacher.*

LEHARD HERBACH [Leonard Harbaugh],	} <i>Elders.</i>
HENRY WEITNER [Weidner],	
PETER HOFFMAN,	

PHILIP BIER,	} <i>Trustees.</i>
WILLIAM BAKER,	
ABRAHAM LORSH [Larsh],	

BALTIMORE, January 1, 1785.

This document, embracing first a statement of the origin of this church, then a constitution, with a series of disciplinary rules, acquires now, after the lapse of more than a century, a peculiar historical interest and value. It shows most manifestly that this church, beginning to take separate form in 1771, more definitely in 1774, and fully organized in 1785 by the adoption and formal promulgation of the rules which it had observed during this time, was, without possible ground for controversy, an independent and distinct body, having no connection, ecclesiastically or otherwise, with the German Reformed Church from which it sprang—neither with the local Reformed congregation in Baltimore, nor with the German Reformed Church as a denomination, nor with the *cœtus* representing the denomination. And it shows as clearly, by its recognition of other local churches in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, over which Mr. Otterbein exercised a superintending care, that the church for which it was framed was the initial church of that already associated body of churches which in time, with other congregations similarly independent, came to be known as the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

In summarizing the following points respecting this document, the outline and thought of Mr. Lawrence in his *History of the United Brethren Church* are mainly followed, as Mr. Lawrence himself followed the more condensed statement of Mr. Spayth.

1. The church on Howard's Hill was "brought together by the ministrations of William Otterbein." Before Mr. Otterbein came to Baltimore a division had already for some time existed, a portion of the members of the German Reformed church withdrawing because they could no longer endure the ministry of Mr. Faber and his successor, Mr. Wallauer. These withdrawing members

had meantime been served by Mr. Schwope, but had not been definitely organized into a church. In May, 1774, Mr. Otterbein, on his arrival in Baltimore, "without delay, and by the help of God, began to organize a church."

2. The name given to this church was not *German* Reformed, but *Evangelical* Reformed, the purpose being to express its independent relation, and at the same time also to emphasize its distinctive character for a more pronounced spirituality—the ground, in fact, of its assuming an independent position. The church did not by this step cease to be a Reformed church. Its pastor did not withdraw from the cœtus, nor did the cœtus disfellowship him. Its position was that of an independent Reformed church. And this attitude of independence it retained in part after entering into relationship with the United Brethren Church.

3. A Christian experience and a godly life are insisted upon as requisites of membership, and provision is made for the expulsion of such as cease to strive after holiness, or lead ungodly lives, conditions then rarely insisted upon in the German Reformed Church.

4. Distinct provision is made for holding *class-meetings*, with the manner, object, and duty set forth, a form of service then unknown in the German Reformed Church. So strongly was the class-meeting emphasized that it was ordained that no preacher unfavorable to it should serve them as a pastor.

5. Not only secret, but family, prayer was enjoined as obligatory upon the members, a duty certainly not widely recognized in the German Reformed churches in America at that time. Family prayer was often scoffed at as folly, as we shall hereafter see.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See p. 108.



6. Keeping worldly and sinful company, and foolish talking and jesting, were made grounds for severe censure, thus seeking to elevate to a high position the standard of personal conduct.

7. The peculiar doctrines of Calvinistic theology were not to be introduced or preached in the church, or held by any of its ministers. "No preacher can stay among us who teacheth the doctrine of predestination, or the impossibility of falling from grace, and who holdeth them as doctrinal points."

This is a very strong position. We have already seen that at Herborn, and generally among German divines, there was a tendency toward relaxation in regard to the severer tenets of Calvinism.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, their place in the Heidelberg Catechism remained fixed—"in the background," it is true, as Dr. Lewis Mayer expresses it in *He Pasa Ekklesia*, but still unchallenged. After remarking that "the doctrinal system of the German Reformed Church is contained in the Heidelberg Catechism," that "the catechism, in its general character, is Calvinistic," and that "the Heidelberg Catechism is the only symbolical book of the church in the United States," Dr. Mayer continues that "subscription to the catechism by candidates for the ministry is not required at their ordination, a verbal profession of the doctrine of the church being deemed sufficient."<sup>2</sup> But here in this thirteenth article of the "Church Book" is a direct and positive contravention of these doctrinal features of the catechism. No man who either teaches or holds them can stay in the church. Mr. Otterbein, though brought up in a church, and educated in a school, which held and taught the Calvinistic theology,—in its milder forms, it is true, as just indicated,—had become Arminian in his faith, and engrafted

<sup>1</sup> See p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *He Pasa Ekklesia*, pp. 343, 344, 345.



his theological beliefs into the "Church Book" of his congregation. If the setting aside of important features of a creed, and the adoption of tenets of a directly opposite character, can be understood as so far changing a church as to make it something different from itself, that is, another church, then surely the adoption *ab initio* of tenets different from, and opposed to, those held by the parent church, must constitute Mr. Otterbein's church an organization separate and distinct from the German Reformed Church.

8. It is to be noted that the "Church Book" of Mr. Otterbein's church is utterly silent as to even the existence of the Heidelberg Catechism. One could not infer from anything it contains that such a symbol is known or recognized among Christian denominations. Nor does it mention, or in any way recognize, the Cœtus of Pennsylvania, nor the Synod of Holland, nor the German Reformed Church as a denomination. Mr. Otterbein, who drew up this declaration, and the men who signed it, had no thought of any relation to, or connection with, the Heidelberg Catechism, the cœtus, or the German Reformed Church. They clearly meant unqualified separation and independence.

In contrast with this may be placed the expression of the old Reformed church in Baltimore, adopted several years after Mr. Otterbein began his work there, stimulated apparently by the example in his church of requiring a godly and pious life as a condition of membership. The substance of this expression is quoted by Mr. Lawrence<sup>1</sup> from a centenary sermon preached by Rev. Elias Heiner, as follows:

"All the members of the congregation shall regularly attend divine worship on the Sabbath; and, with the

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. I., p. 251.

exception of poor persons, shall contribute to the support of the pastor and the congregation. All contentious persons shall not be regarded as church members. Those who fall into open sin shall be put away, and shall not be restored until they show sincere repentance and amendment of life, and declare their willingness to submit to the discipline of the church. Difficulties in the congregation that cannot be adjusted, shall be referred to the synod. No foreign minister can preach in our church without the consent of the pastor and consistory, and he must acknowledge the Reformed confessions of Switzerland and Holland. . . . In catechetical instruction, the Heidelberg Catechism only shall be used."

Nothing could be more decided than the contrast between this expression and that of the "Church Book" of Mr. Otterbein's church. Here is a distinct recognition of the German Reformed Church and the Heidelberg Catechism, and the declarations of the Reformed Church in Holland and Switzerland, and a positive requirement that everything must be in conformity with their order.

9. But to set the position of Mr. Otterbein's church in a still stronger light, the fourteenth and fifteenth articles of the "Church Book" contain a distinct and decisive recognition of "various churches in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia." These churches, the fourteenth article says, are "under the superintendence of William Otterbein," and "stand in fraternal unity with us," and it imposes an absolute obligation on the ministers of the Otterbein Church to recognize these churches. The fifteenth article declares that "no preacher can stay among us who shall refuse to sustain, with all diligence, such members as have arisen from this or some other churches, or who may yet arise, as helpers in the work of the Lord, as preachers and exhorters, and to afford

unto them all possible encouragement, so long as their lives shall be according to the gospel."

Let not any one think of laying such an obligation upon a German Reformed church, or of requiring ministers of the Reformed Church to recognize churches irregularly organized, repudiating the catechism, and having uneducated and unordained ministers, or to accord to such a ministry an unqualified fellowship. The thought of it is preposterous, and the suggestion could have been only offensive.

That ministers rejecting the doctrine of "absolute reprobation" were in some cases denied permission to preach in German Reformed churches, is attested by a statement in point by Mr. Harbaugh. In the year 1742 the pious and distinguished Count Zinzendorf, when on a visit to Philadelphia, desired to preach in a church owned conjointly by the Reformed and Lutheran churches. Applying to Rev. John Philip Boehm, the Reformed pastor, for permission, he stated frankly and in most courteous language his attitude with respect to that doctrine. Permission was politely but unhesitatingly denied.<sup>1</sup>

The churches referred to in articles 13 and 14, in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, were such societies as were formed of men and women converted under the preaching of Mr. Otterbein at various points visited by him from time to time, under the preaching of Mr. Boehm

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. I., pp. 279-281. The following is a portion of the correspondence, as quoted by Harbaugh: Zinzendorf to Boehm: "But because I know that you preach in the same church, and I am not inclined to the doctrine of an absolute reprobation, as a doctrine which, in my religion, is confessedly held as wholly and fundamentally erroneous, I have thought it proper to enquire of you whether you have a right to present aught against my preaching there, since I do not wish to burden any one, or interfere with his rights." Mr. Boehm's answer: "I will be understood as protesting, if any one should say that permission was given from the Reformed side, or from me, to Count Zinzendorf, to preach at the time and place belonging to us, the Reformed."

among his own people, the Mennonites, and under the ministrations of Guething, Newcomer, and others, converts to an evangelical faith and experience, who had themselves become men of marked power in the gospel. Most of these men were unordained by the laying on of human hands, but the touch of a mightier Hand was upon their hearts. Some of them were excommunicated from the fellowship of those who before had called them brethren. The greater number were uneducated, but, like the fishermen and tax-gatherers of Galilee, they kept close company with the Master, and acquired a living theology then less emphasized in the cold formalism of the churches than at the present time. They were plain men from the fields, with slight knowledge of the rules of rhetoric or cultured speech, but God gave them power to reach men's hearts, and everywhere the common people heard them gladly, and many under their preaching were gathered into the Master's fold. They kept also closely in touch with their eminent leader, the pastor of the Evangelical Reformed Church in Baltimore. He exercised over them a general pastoral care, fulfilling even then, though without the name, the highest office of a bishop, that of a general oversight of the flock of God. This relationship the church in Baltimore recognized, and declared that no minister could remain among them who would refuse to extend to the "preachers and exhorters" among these churches "all possible encouragement." Thus under the directing hand of God, and through the ministry largely of lay ministers, were gathered together into numerous congregations, but into a common fellowship, those who in the several churches sought after a thorough and conscious conversion and a truly spiritual life. To them were added many by conversion who had not previously held connection with any of the existing



denominations. And these were the people who, after the lapse of further time, joined themselves together under a common church bond as the United Brethren in Christ.

## II. MR. OTTERBEIN'S RULES ACCEPTED BY THE CHURCHES.

The "Church Book," embodying a constitution and disciplinary rules, was prepared for the congregation in Baltimore alone. But its thoroughly biblical and practical character commended it to the favor of other congregations also. Hence we find Mr. Spayth remarking: "From the second paragraph to the sixth, including the letter (*g*), we have presented to us, in a concise and scriptural form, all that is most essential in constituting a church, and the rules which should govern the same, individually and collectively. As such they were acceptable to all the churches, from and after the first conference, held in the city of Baltimore, in 1789, up to the time of the General Conference in 1815, when they entered, with little variation, under their appropriate sections into our present Discipline."<sup>1</sup>

The following fitting and comprehensive paragraph is quoted from Mr. Spayth: "We like the spirit which pervades that document throughout. Being written in sententious style, it must be read with care. In the original, it is one of the most compact, and at the same time one of the most comprehensive, productions of the pen. Take it as a whole, and in view of the time and the prevailing prejudices, it bears the impress of a master mind, and does honor to the author. The purity of the ministry; the piety of members; the necessity of attending faithfully on the means of grace, in public and in private; the propriety of class- and prayer-meetings; the sacredness

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 56.



of the Sabbath, and how it should be spent; the doctrine of the church; that preachers must harmonize and sustain each other in the work of the Lord to the best of their ability: these points enter essentially into the elementary rules of a Christian church, and upon the observance of them rest the usefulness and perpetuity of churches. As to the age of the Discipline of the United Brethren Church in Christ, it is of little importance whether it be of yesterday or a century past; but it is all-important that it be of the right character, and in the letter and spirit of the Scriptures." The paragraph closes with the significant and true words, "In whatever light our present Discipline may be viewed, and however favorably adjudged by an intelligent community, we find its original traced out by William Otterbein as early as 1785."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 57.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MOVEMENT TOWARD A SEPARATE CHURCH ORGANIZATION

#### I. THE NECESSITY OF A NEW MOVEMENT.

THE enlightened Christian thought of the present time, a period in which the spirit of fraternal union is so widely cherished between the people of different denominations, regards with disfavor any movement looking toward a new religious denomination. Yet there have been times when Divine Providence manifestly led the way toward such a result, and when the blessing of God followed signally those who for the sake of a better religious life broke away from ecclesiastical relations which fixed upon them a hopeless spiritual bondage, and hindered, or with threats of penalties forbade, the exercise of the freer spiritual activities. Without such a movement the Reformation would have been impossible, and the greater part of Christendom must have remained permanently under the control of a centralized and all-powerful spiritual monarchy. Our divine Lord himself originated a movement which gradually took men out of their old relations in a long and indeed divinely established church, and led to the formation of a new and freer church which remains to the present time. Church history abounds with illustrations of godly men seeking again the blessings of spiritual freedom under new and independent conditions. When true spiritual life is repressed, and dead formalities, associated often even with gross immoralities in low and high places, hold sway in the church, and when those

who seek to lead godly lives are mocked and scoffed at and even persecuted by their unspiritual associates in the church, separation sometimes becomes a necessity.

Of Mr. Otterbein it has already been remarked that he was reluctant to take any steps looking toward the organization of a separate denomination. He was warmly attached to the church of his ancestors, the church of his devout and greatly beloved mother, in which his father and all his brothers were honored ministers, and in which he received his education and Christian training. Conservative in disposition, he could not easily break away from traditions which he associated with the most sacred things of life. And, in fact, he never did formally separate himself, nor was he ever separated by any act of the synod, from his place in the German Reformed Church. His name was retained on the ministerial roll of that body up to the end of his life, and until within seven years of the end he continued to attend occasionally its annual sessions. In 1806, however, the last time he was present at a session, he did not attend until he was sent for, and then remained but a short time. For a quarter of a century he had devoted unsparingly the best energies of mind and heart to the service of the Reformed Church, seeking in every place where he held pastoral relations, and in many more which from time to time he visited, to lead the people into a nearer relationship to Christ, and kindle the fires of a more fervent religious life. And in all this much success attended his labors. At Lancaster, at Tulpehocken, at Frederick City, and at York many were, through his earnest preaching and the influence of his pure and godly life, brought into a Christian experience to which they had been strangers before. And then, too, he found men in the ministry of the Reformed Church who fully sym-

pathized with him and his work, some of whom coöperated with him gladly in his spiritual work, but remained in their places in the church. Of some of these something is to be said farther on. It was not a light matter to dissolve, even in part, relations which had so long been dear to him, and which now so strongly bound his heart. Like Mr. Wesley, who, though he was the founder and leader of that great movement in the British Islands and in America which bears the name of Methodism, retained to the end of his life his relationship to the Church of England, Mr. Otterbein was most reluctant to separate himself from his mother church. Mr. Lawrence, speaking of this feeling on his part, says: "Although he had nothing to retract or recall of what he had said or done, and what he was still doing, the dissolving of those relations which, next to God, had possessed his heart, filled his soul with sorrow and anguish, at times, which knew no bounds; tears would fill his eyes and, in big drops, run down his cheeks; and then again, as if he would lay hold on Heaven for an answer, he would exclaim, 'Oh, how can I give thee up!'"<sup>1</sup> It has been well said that nothing could change or in any degree embitter his feelings toward his ministerial brethren of the Reformed Church, though some among them criticised his course with a severity amounting to persecution.

But were the conditions prevailing in the churches of that time of such a character as to justify a general movement toward separation? Was the religious vitality so low, was the outward life of many church members so far from that which becometh Christ, and was there among unregenerate and ungodly church members such a spirit of persecution toward their more godly neighbors, as to render necessary the holding of separate services

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, p. 259.

and the forming of separate congregations? In answer to these questions, so far as it describes the prevailing conditions of the latter half of the eighteenth century, we quote testimony which no one will hold in doubt, the words of distinguished writers in other churches, as Dr. J. W. Nevin, of the Reformed, and Dr. Benjamin Kurtz, of the Lutheran Church.

Dr. Nevin was one of the strong defenders of the Reformed Church, of the Heidelberg Catechism, and the polity of the church. He could not approve the methods adopted by Mr. Otterbein, but he strongly sets forth the type of the church life which prevailed in Mr. Otterbein's time. In his twenty-eighth lecture on the Heidelberg Catechism, published in 1842, at a time when the Reformed Church had become largely emancipated from the earlier spiritual lethargy, Dr. Nevin says: "To be confirmed, and then to take the sacrament occasionally, was counted by the multitude all that was necessary to make one a good Christian, if only a tolerable decency of outward life were maintained besides, without any regard at all to the religion of the heart. True, serious piety was indeed often treated with open and marked scorn. In the bosom of the church itself it was stigmatized as *Schwärmerei*, *Kopfhängerei*, or miserable, driveling Methodism. The idea of the new birth was treated as a Pietistic whimery. Experimental religion in all its forms was eschewed as a new-fangled invention of cunning impostors, brought in to turn the heads of the weak and to lead captive silly women. Prayer-meetings were held to be a spiritual abomination. Family worship was a species of saintly affectation, barely tolerable in the case of ministers (though many of them gloried in having no altar in their houses), but absolutely disgraceful for common Christians. To show an awakened concern on



the subject of religion, a disposition to call on God in daily secret prayer, was to incur certain reproach. . . . The picture, it must be acknowledged, is dark, but not more so than the truth of history would seem to require."

No one not of the Reformed Church would dare to write such an arraignment as this, lest he should be guilty of a grave discourtesy toward the people of another denomination. But Dr. Nevin had a right to speak thus historically of his own. And he certainly did not so write with any thought of defending those who were prominent in the revival movements of the period of which he speaks. After referring to the losses sustained by the Reformed Church through individual transfers to other denominations, he goes on to speak of distinct organizations which, he says, "started forth originally from the Reformed Church itself, and have since acquired very considerable volume, made up in great measure of German material, though not all gathered from the Reformed connection. Otterbein, of Baltimore," Dr. Nevin now continues specifically, "at a comparatively early period (1789) became the founder of one of these organizations. . . . He was a good man, who seems to have been driven into a false position by the cold, dead temper that he found generally prevalent in the regular church."<sup>1</sup>

In full agreement with this representation by Dr. Nevin, is that of Dr. Kurtz, referring to the early portion of the present century. In the *Lutheran Observer* of January 12, 1855, Dr. Kurtz says: "Some thirty-five years ago [1820], when God in his mercy sanctioned our labors with a glorious outpouring of his Spirit, and for the first time in our ministry granted us a mighty revival, the opposition of the world and the devil was almost

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Dr. Drury in *Life of Otterbein*; as also the extract following.

unparalleled. A revival in the Lutheran Church was a new thing in that day. We had never heard of but one, and that was in Brother Reck's church, in Winchester, Virginia. He can testify to the bitterness, malevolence, and awful wickedness that characterized the adversaries of such divine visitations, in those days of ignorance, hardness of heart, and spiritual blindness."

Dr. B. B. Tyler, in his history of the Disciples of Christ, in the "American Church History Series," after some general observations on "the moral and religious life of our fathers at the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries," remarking upon the low plane to which religion had fallen, proceeds to give a view of the religious condition of the colleges of that time. The picture drawn is a startling one, when placed in contrast with the religious state of our colleges at the present time. "When Theodore Dwight," he remarks, "became president of Yale College, in 1795, only four or five students were members of the church. The predominant thought was skeptical. In respect to the Christian faith, the students of the College of New Jersey (Princeton) were not superior to the young men in Yale. The College of William and Mary was a hot-bed of unbelief. Transylvania University, now Kentucky University, founded by Presbyterians, was in the hands of men who repudiated the evangelical faith. At Bowdoin College, at one time in the early part of the nineteenth century only one student was willing to be known as a Christian. Bishop Meade has said that so late as the year 1810, in Virginia, he expected to find every educated young man whom he met a skeptic, if not an avowed unbeliever. Chancellor Kent, who died in 1847, said that in his younger days there were but few professional men who were not unbelievers. Lyman Beecher [the father of Henry Ward

Beecher], in his autobiography, says, speaking of the early years of this century and the closing years of the last, that it was 'the day of the Tom Paine school, when boys who dressed flax in the barn read Tom Paine and believed him.' Mr. Beecher graduated from Yale in 1797, and he tells us that the members of the class of 1796 were known to one another as Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, etc. About this time also wild and undefined expectations were, in many places and by many persons, entertained of a new order of things, and better, about to be ushered in. The Christian religion, it was thought, would soon be thrown to one side as obsolete. . . . It is said that in the year 1800 only one Congregational church in Boston remained loyal to the old faith. When the Rev. Dr. E. D. Griffin became pastor of the Park Street church, in 1811, the current of thought and feeling against orthodoxy was so decided and intense that men went to hear him in disguise. They could not endure the ridicule that they would certainly receive from their acquaintances if the fact became known that they had given attention to a sermon delivered by an evangelical minister."<sup>1</sup>

These glimpses give us a view of the prevailing religious condition of the American colleges, and of one of the chief American cities of that time, outside of the narrow geographical limitations in which the work of Mr. Otterbein and his fellow-laborers was accomplished. But here follows a view that had probably a wide application to the morality of the colonies and of the States after the Revolutionary War:

"Unbelief and immoral living were joined hand to hand. Intemperance prevailed to an alarming extent. To become stupidly drunk did not seriously injure a man's reputation. The decanter was in every home.

<sup>1</sup> *American Church History Series*, Vol. XII., pp. 2, 3.

Total abstinence had hardly been thought of. Temperance sermons were not preached; the pulpit was dumb on this evil. Members of Christian churches in regular standing drank to intoxication. The highest church officials often indulged immoderately in drink. When the physician visited a patient he was offered a stimulant. At marriages, at births, and at the burial of the dead drinking was indulged in. A pastor in New York City, as late as 1820, has left on record the statement that it was difficult to make pastoral visits for a day without becoming, in a measure, intoxicated. Lyman Beecher has given an account of an ordination in which the participating ministers drank until they were in a state bordering on intoxication. The Rev. Daniel Dorchester, D.D., quotes a minister of this period as saying that he could reckon up among his acquaintances forty ministers who were either drunkards or so far addicted to the use of strong drink that their usefulness was impaired."<sup>1</sup>

These statements, so graphically presented, show not only a most unhappy religious condition in the colleges and, in general, among the people not connected with the churches, but also within the sacred circles of the church. Especially do the representations of Dr. Nevin and Dr. Kurtz illustrate the low ebb to which within the churches spiritual life had fallen. It was to reform these conditions, to raise the standard of a truer Christian life, to bring men back to a living faith and a genuine experience of the power of Christ to convert and save the soul, that Mr. Otterbein and those associated with him addressed themselves. With great earnestness and unfaltering purpose they pressed forward their work, and under the attending favor of God achieved most blessed success.

<sup>1</sup> *American Church History Series*, Vol. XII., pp. 3, 4.



## II. ASSOCIATES IN THE WORK.

1. *Martin Boehm.*

Before passing on to speak of the notable initial conference held in 1789, it will be proper here to say something further of some of the associates of Mr. Otterbein in the revival work. A few names will be presented here.

Mr. Boehm continued to preach, as he had now done for many years, the gospel of a true spiritual life among his people, not only to those of his own neighborhood, but to others in various places. It was to be expected that his zeal would in time awaken serious opposition, but it was hardly to be looked for that a man of such manifest sincerity, and of so urbane and kindly a spirit, should by and by be disfellowshipped by his brethren. Yet such was actually the case. A formal indictment was at last made out against him, and he was cited to answer.

Mr. Boehm, like Mr. Otterbein, did not desire to separate himself from the church in which he was brought up, and, like him, was not moved by any unholy ambition to lead in a schismatic movement. It is greatly to the credit of the founders of the United Brethren Church that they did not desire to create division in the body of Christ. It was their noble ambition to elevate the standard of spirituality and godly living in the churches with which they were connected. In this they were in good degree successful, and the earnestness of their labors and the success following aroused against them the worldly and unhallowed spirit which to so unhappy an extent prevailed in the churches of that time. It was this spirit which, arraying itself against them, procured the expulsion of some of them from the communions in which they stood. Among these was Mr. Boehm, of the Mennonite



Church, one of the most worthy of the ministers of that denomination. Jesus said to the apostles that they should be cast out of the synagogues, and precisely this happened to these later apostles of the gospel of Jesus, for their fidelity in proclaiming the deeper and richer significance of the precious word of life.

It is evident, however, that in the case of Mr. Boehm this step was taken with sincere regret, and after much forbearance, as his brethren in the Mennonite ministry understood forbearance. In a small volume published so recently as 1875,<sup>1</sup> is contained at length the history of the proceedings against Mr. Boehm. The history is a translation of a very old document, written more than a century ago. By some singular providence this venerable paper is preserved, and here is a rendering of it into English, made by Rev. John F. Funk, the author of the volume.

The case against Mr. Boehm is set forth quite elaborately, the paper itself being a communication sent out to churches generally "by the ministers of the Mennonite Church of Lancaster County and vicinity." It is, as Mr. Funk tells us, without date, but certain marks about it point plainly to the period from 1775 to 1780, and this harmonizes with such knowledge as is left to us from other sources. After some general introductory statements the paper proceeds:

"Now, however, it is a well-known fact that between us and Martin Boehm there is, in many points, a difference of views, and we have, at times, for several years already, labored to become more of one mind and to understand each other better, that we might be found faithful laborers in the church of Christ; which, however, has not yet been

<sup>1</sup> *The Mennonite Church and Her Accusers*, by Rev. John F. Funk, Elkhart, Indiana, 1878.

accomplished, and the matter has, from time to time, become worse. For the reason, however, that the brotherhood do not possess as good a knowledge of the cause and origin of this disagreement between us, which consists of many things both in words and deeds, as we do (although many also are not entirely unacquainted with it), we have thought it prudent to write them and thus explain the matter. In the first place, in that in which we believe that he (Boehm) erred in the doctrine of Christ, he had a great deal to do with forming a union and associating with men (professors) who allow themselves to walk on the broad way, practicing warfare and the swearing of oaths, both of which are in direct opposition to the truths of the gospel and the teachings of Christ."

The other leading points made against him, which, with the above, are discussed at much length, and finally recapitulated, are that Mr. Boehm said the Scriptures might be burned, because they were a dead letter; "that Satan was good and beneficial to man," "that faith cometh from unbelief, life from death, and light out of darkness." It is very evident that Mr. Boehm's brethren heard distorted reports of his preaching, and that the accusations are quite akin to those brought against our Lord, when the witnesses said that they had heard him say that he would destroy the temple, and in three days build it again. The fundamental fact was that as the preaching of Jesus differed from that of the religious teachers of his time, and they excluded him for that reason from their fellowship, so the earnest, spiritual, soul-kindling preaching of Boehm differed from that of his brethren, and they summoned him to answer. To the requirement that he desist from his course, "he said he could not, but if it could be shown him that he had done wrong, he would recall." The vote for his expulsion being finally taken resulted affirmatively,

and Mr. Boehm went away doubtless with thoughts of the apostles when "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his [Christ's] name."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Funk proceeds to state, following the old manuscript, that Mr. Boehm's followers, such as were members of the Mennonite Church, were also "excluded from the communion and the counsel of the brotherhood, until in true sorrow and penitence they should return and acknowledge their errors both to God and to the church."

Mr. Boehm was a burning and shining light whom God called to a special mission among that people, and happy had it been for them if they had received the divine message from his lips. He took his expulsion in good part, and went on with his work just as he had done before, preaching in his own neighborhood and in numerous other places which he had previously visited. His moral and Christian character had in no wise been assailed, nor had the purity of his motives been placed in doubt. And now, untrammelled by the traditional environments which before had in a degree circumscribed his efforts, he was indeed more free to preach to all who would hear, and the blessing of God rested richly upon his word. Not long afterward he left the care of his farm to his son and gave himself entirely to the work of traveling and preaching.

## 2. *George Adam Guething.*

Next in order among the most distinguished co-laborers of Mr. Otterbein, is to be placed the name of George Adam Guething, his own son in the gospel, as Timothy was of Paul, a man of fair culture though simple in life, "mighty in the Scriptures, and eloquent," as was Apollos, the

<sup>1</sup> Acts 5: 41.

silver-tongued in that company of ardent reformers. Mr. Guething was born not far from the birthplace of Mr. Otterbein, at Nieder Schelden, in Nassau-Siegen, now a part of the province of Hesse-Nassau, Prussia,<sup>1</sup> on the sixth of February, 1741. Like Mr. Otterbein, he was brought up in the Reformed Church. His education was fair, including some knowledge of the Latin language, as well as the German, and he labored for some time as a miner. He came to America in his eighteenth year, landing, it is thought, at Baltimore, and making, soon afterward, his home at Antietam, Washington County, Maryland, where he resided during the rest of his life. Here for a considerable time he spent his winters in teaching school, and the rest of the year in quarrying stone and digging wells. The school-house in which he taught seems to have been that located on the farm which became widely known, as still at the present, as the Schnebley (Snavelly, or Snively) homestead, a home famous for its large hospitality, the house standing near by the church which was afterward erected, and taking from the older house the name of "school-house." It was afterward known also as Guething's Meeting-house. This place was visited by Mr. Otterbein as early as 1760, when he was located at Frederick, as it had been by other Reformed ministers before him, and we cannot doubt that Mr. Guething received through Mr. Otterbein's preaching the divine impulse which brought him to a true conversion and bore him onward in his noble Christian career through life.

Mr. Guething possessed an active temperament, and was soon seen to be an earnest Christian worker. He held also, in the best sense, the confidence of the people of the community, and was urged by them, during the inter-

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 149.



vals of ministerial visits, to read to the congregation selected printed sermons on the Sabbath. Mr. Otterbein continued to visit this place after his removal to York, and later on during his life. The gracious fruits following Mr. Guething's work being observed by Mr. Otterbein, he directed that when Mr. Guething arose again to read a sermon some one should take the book out of his hands and leave him to his own resources. This was indeed proposing a heroic measure, but it was actually done. When Mr. Guething arose again to read, after having conducted the preliminary service, a brother, Mr. Jacob Hess, stepped forward and literally carried out Mr. Otterbein's instruction. Mr. Guething was startled at first, but, soon recovering his poise, proceeded to deliver a most impressive address. His position as a minister now became fixed, and the people at Antietam and elsewhere heard gladly the words of life from his lips. He was ordained to the work of the ministry of the Reformed Church, by the laying on of hands, by Mr. Otterbein and Dr. William Hendel, on Whitsuntide, 1783.

Dr. Drury, in his *Life of Otterbein*, speaks thus of Mr. Guething: He "was a man of good physical constitution, and capable of great endurance. . . . He was possessed of superior gifts. His sympathies were ready and abundant. His understanding of occasions, and faculty of adaptation, were much beyond the usual. He had a voice combining sweetness and power. His method and continued attention to books made him capable of great and increasing usefulness. In his preaching he was earnest, yet deliberate. His addresses to the conscience and feelings were always impressive, and sometimes strikingly moving. As he was in the first place, and in the strictest sense, a product of the revival movement, there were combined in him its strictest moral and logical



characteristics. Otterbein and Boehm, though authors in the movement, were themselves formed by earlier and different influences. The distinctive character of Mr. Guething was apparent in all of his course, from first to last."<sup>1</sup>

Of the relations between Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Guething, Dr. Drury further remarks: "In very important respects he exerted a decided influence upon Mr. Otterbein; and on some subjects, in regard to which Mr. Otterbein has given us no expression, Mr. Guething is the exponent of his thoughts. No field of labor was more enjoyable to Mr. Otterbein than that that awaited him at the Antietam, and in no counsels or associations did he more confide or find truer pleasure than in those that he enjoyed at George A. Guething's."<sup>2</sup>

The small log church spoken of as built upon the Schnebley farm, afterward known as the Guething Meeting-house, is regarded as without doubt the first church erected distinctively for the followers of Mr. Otterbein in the revival movement. The date of its erection is lost, but it is believed to have been before that of Mr. Otterbein's arrival at Baltimore in 1774. The earliest band formed here embraced the names of Mr. Guething, Samuel Baker, Henry Smith, and, soon afterward, Jacob Hess, who has just been mentioned. Whether all in this company of worshipers were of German Reformed antecedents, or what relationship, if any, they assumed to the Reformed Church, is not now known. No deed was made for the ground upon which the humble church was built, the title remaining vested in the owner of the farm. The congregation was found with the United Brethren Church in the further developments of providence.

We find that Mr. Guething is given a place in Mr. Harbaugh's "Fathers of the Reformed Church." Mr. Harbaugh

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 151, 152.

<sup>2</sup> P. 152.

says that he "was prominently identified with the religious movement which resulted in the sect of the United Brethren in Christ, with which he fell in as early as 1772. . . . His name appears in the minutes of synod up to the year 1804, though generally among the absent and excused. At the meeting of synod in Reading, April 29, 1804, complaints were preferred against Mr. Guething on account of disorderly conduct. . . . After a lengthy discussion," the resolution for his expulsion was carried "by a vote of twenty against seventeen." A further quotation from the minutes adds, "He can, however, at any time be restored, on giving evidence of true reformation." Remark further, Mr. Harbaugh says: "Highly fanatical proceedings on his part seem to have led to his expulsion. He continued ministering in harmony with the Brethren till his death. . . . He spent forty years in the ministry. Though wildly fanatical, and as such badly suited to be a leader of God's people, he seems to have been personally a good man."<sup>1</sup>

This account of Mr. Guething's fanaticism, no other charge being laid against him, will not damage his memory in the estimation of United Brethren. It was the kind of fanaticism into which the apostles fell, as regarded from the standpoint of Pharisees and scribes, the fanaticism which has characterized many of the foremost ministers of the United Brethren Church, which gave to the Methodist Church its vast distinctive power to save souls, which distinguishes in strongest contrast the real, living, forward movements of the church from the inertia of spiritual death, but a fanaticism nevertheless which seemed to many of the Reformed ministers of that day, and to Mr. Harbaugh as well, to be out of harmony with the requirements of proper churchly decorum. And,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II., p. 398.

further, it was after all a bare majority that pronounced sentence of excommunication, seventeen of the members voting against the unbrotherly proceeding.

Mr. Harbaugh mentions a Mr. Becker as the chief instigator of the measure of expulsion. He was the same Becker who, two years later, having then become pastor in Baltimore, at a session of the synod of 1806, dealt so harshly with the venerable and saintly Otterbein, then eighty years of age, and for his last time in attendance upon the synod, and shortly afterward, on meeting him, poured out upon him bitter language, ending with a threat to have him expelled from the synod. His vile aspersions, however, failed to produce any effect on the minds of the ministers in the case of Mr. Otterbein. The greater number felt honored in being permitted to retain his name in association with their own, and Mr. Harbaugh, while speaking frankly of what he conceives to have been his errors, pays him distinguished honor in his extended memorial. And yet Mr. Otterbein's and Mr. Guething's offense was the same, with perhaps the difference that Mr. Otterbein, schooled under a more exact training in his early life, was more conservative in his methods.

Mr. Spayth, in his history of the Church, thus places in contrast the varying talents of the three men whose names stand foremost in early United Brethren history: "The talent and ministerial graces of these three brethren-in-chief . . . cannot now be well conceived. . . . Otterbein was argumentative, eloquent, and often terrible. In the elucidation of Scripture he was very clear and full, few being his equal. Boehm was the plain, open, and frank expounder of God's Word, being all animation, all life, often irresistible, like a mighty current, carrying his hearers into deep water. But Brother Guething was more like a spring sun rising on a frost-silvered forest, gradually

affording more heat, more light, till you could hear, as it were, the crackling in the forest, and the icy crust beginning to melt and fall away, and like a drizzling shower, ending in a clear and joyous day. Such was Guething. He was the St. John of this clover-leaf; always soft and mellowing; of good parts, having a well-cultivated mind; in conversation cheerful, interesting, and pleasing; and every way a desirable companion. . . . His bland manners, his affability and shining talents, secured for him universal respect and esteem, good congregations, and, what was much more important, access to the hearts and consciences of those who came to hear him.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Guething has by some been reckoned among the early bishops of the Church. From Mr. Spayth we learn that he presided at the session of an annual conference at Antietam, his own home, on May 12, 1812,<sup>2</sup> Bishop Boehm having died in March preceding, and Bishop Otterbein being too feeble from age to attend, but there seems to be no record of his having been at any time formally elected to the office of bishop. Had his death not occurred so soon after, just six weeks later, it is altogether probable that he would have been so elected as associate with Bishop Newcomer after the death of Bishop Otterbein. Mr. Spayth, whose time was in part contemporary with these fathers, does not speak of him as a bishop.

### 3. *Other Helpers.*

Before passing to other names which became permanently identified with the movement which resulted in the organization of the United Brethren Church, it is proper here to introduce those of some devout men who

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.



retained their active connection with the Reformed Church, but gave to Mr. Otterbein their most cordial sympathy, and in some features of his work entered into practical coöperation with him. We have seen that at the session of the synod at which Mr. Guething's name was erased from the records the members were so far from unanimous that the minority sustaining him almost equaled the majority which voted for the exclusion, and also that the name of Mr. Otterbein was retained in honored relation to the end of his life. Indeed, Mr. Harbaugh makes complete claim to Mr. Otterbein for the Reformed Church, and represents that during the later years of his life he lamented having given his influence and support to the movement which grew into a separate denomination. We have abundant evidence that, so far from this being the case, he rejoiced over the results of his labors and those of his brethren with him in encouraging a truer apprehension of the meaning of the gospel and a more devout Christian life. But it is a sincere pleasure to note that while many opposed him, some even to the extent of bitterness and persecution, sometimes closing the doors of their churches against him, there was a considerable number of the Reformed ministers who recognized the great value of his labors, and gladly coöperated with him. Foremost among these was the Rev. Dr. William Hendel, a man of fine education and brilliant pulpit powers. He came to America in 1765, well advanced in years, his first charge being that at Lancaster, where Mr. Otterbein began his work. He was a man of devout spirit, and appropriately recognized as the St. John among the Reformed ministers. Between him and Mr. Otterbein a warm friendship soon sprang up, which continued during life. His high standing is strongly attested by the history of that period, and no less so his earnest sympathy with



Mr. Otterbein in his particular work. He adopted in good part the methods of Mr. Otterbein, as, for example, the holding of regular prayer-meetings on week-day evenings. Another of Mr. Otterbein's warm friends was Rev. Daniel Wagner, a student of theology under Dr. Hendel. Mr. Wagner was pastor, at different times, of several of the churches which Mr. Otterbein had served, as at York, Tulpehocken, Frederick City, and a second time at York. Between Mr. Wagner and Mr. Otterbein a lasting friendship was formed, and a regular correspondence was maintained up to the end of Mr. Otterbein's life. In Mr. Harbaugh's "*Fathers of the Reformed Church*," no man stands with a fairer record than Mr. Wagner. Others of Mr. Otterbein's closer associates, all of them men of high standing in the cœtus, were Rev. Anthony Hautz, also a pupil under Dr. Hendel, Rev. Frederick L. Henop, and Rev. Jacob Weimer. Among these was also the Rev. Benedict Schwope, through whose influence chiefly Mr. Otterbein was induced to become the pastor of the independent church in Baltimore. All these men were fully awake to the peculiar spiritual needs of the time, were thoroughly evangelical in spirit, and accomplished much good in the German Reformed Church.<sup>1</sup>

We are here to note a special form of religious meetings in which these ministers, six in number, including Mr. Otterbein, became interested, and which were maintained with much spiritual profit for a few years. To the reader acquainted with what was known as Pietism in Germany the resemblance between the meetings organized by these men and the Pietistic movement of the old country will readily occur. The movement in Germany, which took

<sup>1</sup>See biographical sketches in Mr. Harbaugh's *Fathers of the Reformed Church*, Vol. II.

its rise in the latter half of the seventeenth century, at Frankfort-on-the-Main, under the leadership of Philip Jacob Spener, was an effort to reawaken and encourage the growth of a true spiritual life in the dead orthodox churches. It did not propose the organization of a separate denomination or church, but sought to gather together for special and private religious services those who desired the experience of a deeper piety and the attainment of a more exemplary outward Christian life. It was but natural that the movement should meet with opposition on the part of the unconverted and worldly-minded who constituted the great body of the German churches. It was also doubtless true that the Pietists fell into excesses, such as must bring inevitable reproach upon those engaged in the movement. But the movement nevertheless accomplished great good in Germany. Many who had until then rested satisfied with their relationship in the church, without any true Christian experience, were aroused from the sleep of a dead orthodoxy to a real life in Christ. The greatest development of the similar movement in England took place under John Wesley, who, after his own conversion, sought to arouse the same genuine spiritual life in the Established Church. The reader will here remember that Mr. Wesley retained to the end of his life his connection with his mother church, while the great movement known as Methodism was inaugurated by him and with the help of his active associates advanced to a place of so great spiritual power among the religious forces of the world.

Mr. Otterbein, under the guidance of the eminent and devout Dr. Schramm, of Herborn, early imbibed Pietistic ideas, and we are here to recall, as above referred to, that among his regular duties as pastor at Ockersdorf was that of holding a weekly prayer-meeting. Regular meet-

ings of a like kind held by him in Tulpehocken have already been spoken of, and here the example of Mr. Otterbein was followed by Dr. Hendel when, some years later, he succeeded to that charge.

The special meetings now to be spoken of began to be held in the month of May, 1774, the year and month of Mr. Otterbein's coming to Baltimore. Among the ministers themselves some form of bond was adopted, under the name of "The United Ministers." The particular form of their procedure was the organization into bands, or unions, of those in their congregations who desired to interest themselves in the promotion of their own personal piety, and to seek also for the encouragement of a like deeper religious experience in the hearts of others. In this they adopted the precise method of Mr. Spener in Germany. Such bands, or classes, were organized by each of the ministers in his own congregation, and, as far as practicable, in other congregations having no pastors, which they visited. In some of the congregations, where there was a general acquiescence on the part of the members, two or more classes were formed, the men and the women holding their meetings separately. Regular leaders were appointed for the classes, thus showing the beginning of a feature of United Brethren polity which has been maintained since. Some of these leaders, finding thus a special field for the exercise of their gifts, in time became ministers. Among these we find prominent the name of George Adam Guething.

The United Ministers for two years held regularly semiannual meetings for the purpose of hearing reports of the work, and planning for its successful prosecution. The minutes of these meetings were some years ago discovered at Pipe Creek, near Baltimore, where Rev. Benedict Schwope was pastor. A transcript of those of

one or two of the meetings will here possess a special interest as illustrating what was sought to be done and the methods followed. The original is in the handwriting of Mr. Schwope, who was secretary for the organization.<sup>1</sup>

May 29, 1774.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At our meeting at Pipe Creek the following action was taken respecting our several congregations:

1. Concerning the congregation at Baltimore it was resolved that, besides the public meeting on Sunday, the male members shall meet twice a week in two classes; to wit, the class in the upper part of the city on Tuesday evening, and of this class Leonard Herbach is appointed leader [*Aufseher*]; the other class, of which Henry Weidner is leader, meets on Friday evening. The female members are to meet separately, every Tuesday afternoon.

2. The members at Pipe Creek [*die Peiff-Kricker*] have also formed themselves into two classes. David Schreiber and Michael Huebener are appointed leaders of the first, and Uhly Aeckler and Hans Fischer of the second class. These are to meet every Sunday; and no one is to withdraw without good reason.

3. The members at Sam's Creek [*die Sam's Kricker*] are to constitute a single class. Adam Lehman and Martin Cassel are appointed leaders. They are also to hold their meetings on Sunday.

4. The members at Fredericktown [*die Friedrichstowner*] have organized but one class. They are to meet on Sunday evening, and propose to elect a leader for themselves.

5. The members at Antietam [*die Antitemer*] are to meet every Sunday, in two classes. George Adam Gueding [*Guething*] and Samuel Becker are appointed leaders. They are to meet alternately at the church and at Conrad Schnaebeli's [*Schnebley, or Snavely*], or wherever else the leaders may direct.

The ground and object of these meetings is to be, that those thus united may encourage one another, pray and sing in unison, and watch over one another's conduct. At these meetings they are to be especially careful to see to it that family worship is regularly maintained. All those who are thus united are to take heed that no disturbances occur among them, and that the affairs of the congregations be conducted and managed in an orderly manner.

<sup>1</sup> The reader is here referred to Dr. Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 194-202, where the entire series of minutes appears. They are reprinted from a translation of Rev. Dr. J. H. Dubbs, published by him in the *Reformed Quarterly*.



Resolved to meet again on the first Sunday in October, at D. Schreiber's. Done on the date above mentioned.

W. OTTERBEIN.

B. SCHWOPE.

The second meeting was held on the date and at the place named in the previous minutes. A further organization of classes is the principal feature of interest. The minutes of this meeting are signed by all the above-named ministers, six in number, Mr. Otterbein's name standing first, and Mr. Schwope's last, as secretary. The third meeting, the minutes of which follow, was held at Frederick City. The record is chiefly that of reports from the several charges.

FREDERICKTOWN, June 12, 1775.

In the name of our blessed Lord. Amen.

We, William Otterbein, William Hendel, Frederick Henop, Jacob Weimer, Daniel Wagner, and Benedict Schwope, have met in this town, according to the resolution passed at our meeting held last October at Pipe Creek, and after due examination the following was found to be the condition of the congregations or classes:

1. The friends in this town are at peace, and continue their private meetings twice a week, besides regularly attending the service in the church.
2. The friends at Pipe Creek are equally prosperous, appear serious in their conduct, and, it is hoped, derive a blessing from their meetings.
3. Those at Sam's Creek are at peace, and appear serious.
4. Those at Antietam are again at peace, after a slight disturbance, and meet on Sundays.
5. Those at Baltimore are at peace; but it is to be feared and guarded against that with their good order and regular meetings they do not take the appearance for the reality.
6. Those at Sharpsburg remain in their previous condition. They hold meetings. There is no reason to imagine evil, but it might be wished that their condition were more prosperous.
7. Those at Funkstown number only a few families, and as they live close together they meet according to their convenience. At this place progress is very desirable.
9. The friends at Canawaken [Conewago] (who were mentioned at our last meeting at Pipe Creek) continue to meet on Sunday, besides going regularly to church, as is our universal order. We have reason to hope for good results.



10. Certain friends in Hagerstown were interested, but none of them have come to our present meeting. We hope the Lord will kindle among them a flame of love and holy zeal.

11. Resolved that our next meeting be held at Baltimore, on Sunday, October 15.

Finally, we observe that since our first meeting, which is now more than a year ago, no disturbance has arisen in any one of the aforesaid classes and congregations—except a little trouble at Antietam, which has been covered up with the mantle of charity. In this may be seen the fruits of good discipline, in that at least three hundred souls have remained so long at peace, and we hope in the blessing of the Lord; and may doubtless be preserved in this condition. We hope and desire that the Lord, the merciful, would daily add to their numbers.

Written and done on the date aforesaid, by order of the United Ministers, by  
BENEDICT SCHWOPE, *Secretary*.

The minutes of other meetings following are in character much like the preceding. On October 15 a meeting was held at Baltimore, agreeably to the resolution previously adopted, and another followed, at Hagerstown, on June 2, 1776.

This meeting of June 2 is the last of which any minutes remain, and whether any succeeding meetings were held is therefore not known. There are indications that the unfavorable attention of the cœtus began to be drawn toward this movement of the United Ministers. It would be quite impossible that the cœtus could ever have regarded it with approval. And the fact that at this June meeting a license to preach was ordered to be granted to an applicant, a Mr. Henry Weidner, must doubtless have had the appearance of a schismatic procedure. The license was not signed by Mr. Wagner, who may, however, not have been present at the last meeting of the ministers, on June 2. It is also known that Mr. Wagner and Dr. Hendel, who were somewhat more conservative than Mr. Otterbein, began to have some apprehensions as to the results which might grow out of his more decisive

measures. By this time also the War of the Revolution was in earnest progress, and it seems quite probable that, with the prevailing public excitement, the meetings were now suspended. At the June meeting another was arranged for, to be held on October 20. It is probable that it was never held.

There is good reason for believing that Mr. Otterbein cherished the hope of seeing this revival movement spread more extensively among the Reformed churches, as Pietism had done in Germany, greatly to the spiritual profit of the German churches. And he had the greater ground for such hope in the fact that some of the foremost men in the *cœtus*, notably Dr. Hendel, heartily coöperated with him. But such hope ended in disappointment, and the necessity soon appeared of giving attention to the work of revivals among the churches which he visited, without such formal coöperation. It must be borne in mind that this work, so far as the association of the United Ministers was concerned, was all within the Reformed Church. Mr. Schwoppe alone, of the company of the United Ministers, remained in permanent coöperation with Mr. Otterbein. The other men, however, carried with them from this association a benign spiritual power that told during the rest of their lives upon their own work, conducted in the regular forms of the Reformed Church, in abundance of blessed fruits. Nor did the severance of this union of consecrated men draw away the hearts of any of them from Mr. Otterbein. The most intimate and confidential of his earthly friends up to the end of his life was Daniel Wagner, and between himself and Dr. Hendel the relations of the highest esteem and warmest cordiality existed permanently.

Of the laymen who were appointed leaders of classes, a number, as we have already seen, developed into

preachers, and these joined themselves to the work under Mr. Otterbein. Among these was Henry Weidner, who was licensed to preach by the United Ministers; also Adam Lehman, Leonard Herbach (Harbaugh), Peter Kemp, and George Adam Guething. The last of these, however, had been a recognized preacher, unordained, since 1774. He was regularly ordained, as already mentioned, by Mr. Otterbein and Dr. Hendel, in 1783, a fact which may be accepted as proof of Dr. Hendel's continued friendly coöperation with Mr. Otterbein.

In this part of our history have been traced more definitely the relations of ministers of the German Reformed Church to the work which was developing under Mr. Otterbein, leaving out of view for a time the Mennonite branch of the general movement. The reader will see presently that during these years there was in progress among the Mennonites a steady and growing activity, and that in the first formal conference, that of 1789, to which attention is presently to be directed, their distinguished leader, Mr. Boehm, and others of his brethren, were present to participate in its counsels.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FIRST AND SECOND CONFERENCES

#### I. THE FIRST FORMAL CONFERENCE—1789.

It has already been seen that Mr. Otterbein was reluctant to take any steps that looked toward a separate church organization. His heart clung warmly to the church in which he was born and reared, the church of his devout and honored parents, and of his worthy kindred in the Fatherland. He was not insensible to the traditions of the Reformed Church in the several countries of continental Europe, to its noble record of achievement in the historic struggles for religious and intellectual emancipation, especially in Germany, in Switzerland, and in Holland, and to the invaluable legacy of blessing it had nobly assisted in securing for millions. With the memory of all this noble record and these tender family associations fresh in his cultured mind, he cherished for that church an affection which time could not obliterate, and which the sharp and ungenerous criticism of brethren who opposed him could not diminish. He was by natural organization conservative, and not a separatist; earnest, resolute, steadily adhering to a purpose deliberately formed, but in no sense hasty or rash, never ready to enter, under the force of impulse, into an ill-advised movement. He possessed in an eminent degree those qualities which belong to a judicious and safe counselor. As the principal leader, therefore, of a great religious movement he manifested none of the reckless haste, the

pronounced and often offensive self-assertion, which have too frequently characterized men who have appeared as leaders of schismatic movements—men who, if they could not have their own way in governing or controlling the affairs of a denomination, stood ready to rend in pieces and become leaders of factions.

But while Mr. Otterbein entertained this high regard for the denomination in which he had been nurtured, he was profoundly conscious of the spiritual dearth which so broadly prevailed among its people, and, having himself entered into a better religious experience, he was earnestly desirous that others might attain with him the same grace. For years he allowed himself to entertain the hope that a genuine revival of a purer form of religion might be brought about in the church. There were encouraging signs of this, alike under his own ministry in his own and other congregations and under the ministry of several of his more devout associates. But gradually, through the spiritual inertia which so widely prevailed in both the ministry and the laity, and the rising tide of opposition, which became more pronounced, this hope ceased to be entertained. And gradually, also, an overruling Providence marked out for him the way and led him onward to that greater work which it was intended he should achieve.

In the progressive development of the work it became necessary to supply many of the newly formed congregations with lay preaching. Some of the preachers were the men who had been previously appointed as the leaders of classes; others were young or older men in whose hearts God had awakened a deep interest in the salvation of their fellow-men. Generally they were men of limited education, but the fires of a true and warm spiritual life burned within them, and in their plain, simple, and earnest



way they declared the power of the gospel to save. Many of them continued to pursue their secular callings, giving their Sabbaths and some of the week-day evenings to the preaching of the word. During certain times of the year they also made journeys, frequently quite extended, to engage in this sacred work. Others among them gave themselves entirely to the work of the ministry, preaching on every Sabbath and usually several times during the week.

For a series of years these men pursued their work under the general direction of Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Boehm. "Great meetings" (*grosse Versammlungen*) continued to be held, at which the ministers were usually present in considerable numbers. These were occasions of greatly prized spiritual reunion, and preachers and people gladly availed themselves of them, often traveling long distances to attend them. They also afforded opportunities for counsel between the ministers, and here, and elsewhere as occasion served, Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Boehm were accustomed to outline the work to be done by the ministers who received their instructions from them. But the time came when it seemed desirable that a more definite and systematic method of procedure should be adopted, and when the ministers who were to serve the various churches should not only perform the service that was appointed to them, but should more directly share the responsibility of the work. It was with this purpose in view that a call was issued inviting all the ministers to assemble for a council, or conference, the first formal and definitely organized conference of the ministers of the churches which were afterward to become known as the United Brethren in Christ.

The conference convened in Mr. Otterbein's parsonage, in the city of Baltimore. Fourteen ministers were recog-

nized as members, of whom seven were present, and the same number absent. The names of those present were: William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, Henry Weidner, George A. Guething, Christian Newcomer, Adam Lehman, John Ernst. Those absent were: Benedict Schwope, Henry Baker, Simon Herre, Frederick Schaeffer, Martin Crider, Christopher Grosch, Abraham Draksel.

An analysis of these lists shows that of the seven men present at the conference five were of Reformed antecedents, and two of Mennonite. Of those absent four were Reformed, two Mennonite, and one Moravian.

The reader will pause here to look in for a few moments upon this small company of earnest, spiritual men, seated together for important counsel in the plainly furnished room of the old Otterbein parsonage. The central figure among them, the man to whose wise words all gladly defer, is Mr. Otterbein himself. Mr. Otterbein is now about sixty-three years of age, and in the full maturity of sound judgment and ripened purpose. Thirty-seven years have passed since he began his ministerial work in America, years of earnest toil for the best spiritual fruits. It is about twenty-three years since his first meeting with Martin Boehm, and fifteen since he entered upon the pastorate of the independent church in Baltimore. Next to him in ripeness of experience and safe counsel is Martin Boehm, still wearing the plain garb of his Mennonite brethren, and still possessing the genial and sweet Christian temper which characterized him in his earlier life. He is in age about one year the senior of Mr. Otterbein, and has been in the ministry about thirty years. More than ten years previous he had been disfellowshipped by his brethren because they could not understand the new spiritual life which he loved, and the gospel of a true conversion and conscious salvation which he preached.

Here also we find the earnest, laborious, and eloquent Guething, who had left the school-room and quarries of Antietam to hew out living stones for the beautifying of God's temple. Of Christian Newcomer, to become, after Otterbein and Boehm, a bishop in the Church, a future word is to be spoken.

We can readily understand that the sessions of these men are characterized by much earnest prayer. A great work has gradually developed under their hands, and many souls now look to them especially for the bread of life. Much opposition has been encountered, alike by the preachers and the people. Their methods have been derided, and in numerous instances they have been excommunicated from the fellowship of those whom they held dear. Ecclesiastical, social, and family ostracism has set its ban against many of them, often with much bitterness. Gradually the people have been gathered into flocks, and these men, with their absent brethren, have become shepherds over them. The time has come when some forward step must be taken, not only in more systematically organizing the methods of supply for preaching, but in determining upon some formal bond of union by which the scattered societies shall be brought into a closer recognition and fellowship.

Questions of the most serious import must have presented themselves at this conference for consideration. We can scarcely doubt that the question of organizing a church, a new member in the then more limited family of Protestant denominations, was introduced. But if so, it was not clearly resolved upon. The action they took would in some respects bear the interpretation, but it does not appear that they applied the name church to the compact which they formed. It is certain that they did not adopt for it a name, nor did they bring to completion

various features that are essential to a definite church organization. All this, in more distinct form, was left for the Conference of 1800, when a name was adopted, and the fuller essentials for an organized and progressive church life were provided.

And yet when one reflects upon the action which was taken, of a two-fold character, namely, the adoption of a distinct confession of faith and of a series of disciplinary rules, it is difficult to resist the conviction that here—whether these men so intended it or not—there was actually formed a church. It is not of consequence that the Confession is brief, or that the Rules of Discipline leave much ground to be covered. The Confession is comprehensive and embraces the most vital points of our Christian faith, and the rules adopted, simple as they are, were sufficient for the requirements of the time. Nor does the failure to adopt a name constitute a barrier to regarding the organization as a church. The early Christian church, organized by the Lord himself and his apostles, was not known by a definite name until years afterward, when “the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch,” and the confession of faith and rules of discipline were not any more definitely outlined than were these of this humble conference.

The brethren of this Conference of 1789 doubtless builded more wisely and greater than they knew. Their work was germinal indeed, and there was to be further development before all things could be provided for; but here the foundations were laid, and the work moved forward with a greater measure of independence than before.

## II. THE FIRST CONFESSION OF FAITH.

This instrument, adopted by this initial conference of ministers, is entitled “The Doctrine of the United Brethren



in Christ," the title, however, being not a part of the original draft. It is comprehended in five articles, as follows :

ARTICLE 1. In the name of God we confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that these three are one; the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence with both; that this God created heaven and earth and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, and sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

ART. 2. We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man, Saviour and Redeemer of the whole world; that all men through him may be saved if they will; that this Jesus suffered for us; that he died and was buried, rose on the third day, ascended into heaven, and that he will come again, at the last day, to judge the living and the dead.

ART. 3. We believe in the Holy Ghost; that he proceeds from the Father and the Son; that we through him must be sanctified and receive faith, thereby being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

ART. 4. We believe that the Bible is the word of God; that it contains the true way to our souls' well-being and salvation; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it, with the influences of the Spirit of God, as his only rule and guide; and that without repentance, faith in Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins, and following after Jesus Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

ART. 5. We believe that the doctrine which the Holy Scriptures contain, namely, the fall in Adam and salvation through Jesus Christ, shall be preached and proclaimed throughout the whole world.

We recommend that the outward signs and ordinances, namely, baptism and the remembrance of the Lord in the distribution of the bread and wine, be observed; also the washing of feet, where the same is desired.<sup>1</sup>

This creed, so clear and beautiful in its expression, and so comprehensive in its grasp, is most manifestly the production of Mr. Otterbein's discriminating mind and pen—not indeed in the sense of the creation of its materials, but in the judicious selection and arrangement of its

<sup>1</sup> Confession Prior to 1815, translated by Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D., in *Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841*, p. 3.



elements. Brief as it is, it is worthy to take rank among the foremost creeds of Christendom. The reader who is acquainted with the German language will be pleased to see it in its original form. Here its strength of diction and its simplicity and directness are even more apparent than in our translation :

### Die Lehre der Vereinigten Brüder in Christo.

Artikel 1. Im Namen Gottes bekennen wir vor Jedermann, daß wir glauben an den einigen wahren Gott, Vater, Sohn und Heiligen Geist, daß diese drei eins sind, der Vater im Sohn, der Sohn im Vater und der heilige Geist gleichen Wesens mit beiden, daß dieser Gott, Himmel und Erden, und alles was darin ist, sowohl sichtbar als unsichtbar, erschaffen hat, und alles traget, regieret, schützt und erhält.

Art. 2. Wir glauben an Jesum Christum, daß er wahrer Gott und Mensch, Heiland und Versöhner der ganzen Welt ist, daß alle Menschen durch ihn selig werden können, wenn sie wollen, daß dieser Jesus für uns gelitten, gestorben und begraben, am dritten Tage wieder auferstanden, gen Himmel gefahren und am jüngsten Tage wieder kommen wird zu richten die Lebendigen und die Toten.

Art. 3. Wir glauben an den heiligen Geist, daß er vom Vater und Sohn ausgehe, daß wir durch ihn müssen geheiligt werden, und den Glauben erlangen, welcher uns reiniget von aller Befleckung des Fleisches und des Geistes.

Art. 4. Wir glauben, daß die Bibel Gottes Wort ist, daß sie den wahren Weg zu unserm Selenheil und Seligkeit enthalte, daß ein jeder wahrer Christ, dieselbe mit den Einflüssen des Geistes Gottes, einzig und allein zu seiner Richtschnur nehmen müsse und das ohne Buße und Glauben an Jesum Christum, Vergebung der Sünden und Nachfolge Jesu Christi, Niemand ein wahrer Christ sein kann.

Art. 5. Wir glauben, daß die Lehre, welche die heilige Schrift enthält, nämlich der Fall in Adam und die Errettung durch Jesum Christum der ganzen Welt gepredigt und verkündigt werden sollte. Außere Zeichen und Verordnungen, nämlich die Taufe und das Gedächtnis des Herrn, in Austeilung des Brodes und Weins, werden anempfohlen, wie auch das Fußwaschen, wo es begehret wird.<sup>1</sup>

Upon this instrument Professor Drury, in his *Life of Otterbein*, makes the following just remarks: "The Confession may be taken as a reflection of Mr. Otterbein's mind, and when regarded as a whole it is simple and majestic. It impresses by what it includes, by what it

<sup>1</sup>A manuscript copy of this Confession is preserved in the vaults of the United Brethren Publishing House at Dayton, Ohio. It is published in *Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841*.

omits, and by its doctrinal savor. It rests on the Apostles' Creed and the New Testament, and adds only those necessary specifications in regard to the application and mission of the gospel that even the simplest of the later creeds have been compelled to include. The closing part grew out of a particular exigency. The glory of the creed is, that while Mr. Otterbein drew it together he did not make it; that while he used old material he appreciated every word and element that he employed, and that he was biased neither by obsolete forms nor by recent controversies. The creed might be called a working creed—a fit creed for a revival people, whose defense is rather in the heart than in the armor.”<sup>1</sup>

The “particular exigency” to which Dr. Drury alludes in the above, has reference to important differences in beliefs and practices as between the Reformed and Mennonite churches. The Mennonite Church, as we have seen, practiced only adult baptism, while the Reformed baptized also infants. The Mennonites practiced feet-washing, elevating the “example” of Jesus, as narrated in John 13: 1-17, to the character of a sacrament, ordained for perpetual observance in the church. The Reformed regarded it as only an example, and not as an ordinance. The Mennonites entering into this new compact could not at once abandon their traditional practices in these things, neither could the Reformed adopt them. But they could from each side consent to an unhindered freedom to practice or not to practice, according to the dictates of their own sincere convictions, traditions, or education, and this they did most heartily and in the spirit of a true brotherly and Christian concession. No particular mode of baptism, nor any specified age of subjects, was commanded, and the washing of feet was commended when it was desired.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, p. 232.

The spirit of this concession is in strict harmony with the apostolic feeling, the reflection of the same broad charity and generous forbearance which gave so rich a glory to the first church council in Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> And equally is it in accord with the spirit of concession as set forth in that earliest of church manuals, the recently discovered "Didache," or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." Referring to the practice of baptism, this venerable document says: "As regards baptism, baptize in this manner: Having first given all the preceding instruction, baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living [running] water. But if thou hast not living water, baptize into other water; and if thou canst not in cold, [then] in warm. But if thou hast neither [neither running nor standing, neither cold nor warm water, in sufficient quantity for immersion], pour water on the head three times, into the name of Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit."<sup>2</sup>

It is cause for sincere gratification that this spirit of mutual forbearance and concession, thus appearing in this early instrument of the organic life of the United Brethren Church, still remains as a characteristic of the denomination. No attempt has ever been made to limit the freedom thus established by the fathers of the Church. The rite of baptism may be administered by sprinkling, or by immersion, as was perhaps generally done in the early church, or by pouring, as permitted by the "Didache." The washing of feet is not regarded by the Church as an ordinance, as it was not from the beginning; but remembering the "example" of Jesus in teaching his apostles a lesson of service, it is permitted without

<sup>1</sup> Acts 15.

<sup>2</sup> *The Oldest Church Manual, Called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, by Dr. Philip Schaff, p. 30.

hindrance to the few remaining among us who still cling to the customs of their Mennonite fathers.

### III. THE DISCIPLINARY RULES.

Passing from these observations on the Confession adopted by the Conference of 1789, the "Disciplinary Rules" which were approved at the same meeting, and which, Mr. Spayth says, "governed the Church from the first conference held in Baltimore, 1789, up to 1815," that is, up to the time of the first General Conference, are also here presented. The following are the rules, as translated from the original by Mr. Spayth. The reader will observe that, in a condensed form, they are based upon the rules adopted four years previously for the Otterbein Church in Baltimore.

(*a*) That no one, be he a preacher or lay member, can be a member of this Church, who should be found to lead an offensive life. (I. Tim. 3 : 1-3; I. Cor. 5 : 13.)

(*b*) To keep the Sabbath day holy, and attend divine worship.

(*c*) To attend class- or prayer-meeting once a week.

(*d*) That no one be received into the Church who is not resolved to flee the wrath to come, and by faith and repentance to seek his salvation in Christ, and be resolved willingly to obey the disciplinary rules which are now observed for good order; yet always excepted [provided] that such rules are founded on the Word of God, as the only unerring guide of faith and practice.

(*e*) That a neglect of class- and prayer-meetings by any one, after being twice or thrice admonished, without manifest amendment (sickness or absence from home excepted), excludes such from the Church.

(*f*) Every member to abstain from all backbiting and evil speaking (I. Pet. 2 : 1; Jas. 4 : 11). The transgressor in the first instance to be admonished privately, but the second time to be reprov'd in the class-meeting.

(*g*) Forasmuch as the difference of people and denominations ends in Christ (Rom. 10 : 12; Col. 3 : 11), and availeth nothing, but a new creature (Gal. 6 : 13-16), it becomes our duty and privilege, according to the gospel, to commune with and admit professors of religion to the Lord's table without partiality.



(h) That each member strive to lead a quiet and godly life, lest he give offense, and fall into the condemnation of the adversary (Matt. 5: 14-16).

(i) All offenses between members shall be dealt with in strict conformity to the precepts of our Lord (Matt. 18: 15-18).

(j) Should a preacher or elder be accused of any known immorality, and upon the testimony of two or three creditable witnesses, he being present, the charge be proven against him, he will be immediately suspended, and until he gives proof of true repentance, and makes open confession to the society, he remains excluded from the Church. The same rule shall be observed against members of the Church who shall be found guilty of immoral conduct (I. Cor. 5: 11-13; I. Tim. 5: 20).<sup>1</sup>

The reader will observe that the word "church" occurs several times in these rules. If, therefore, the translation conveys the true original intent, the thought of organizing a church must then have been present in the minds of the conference. It may be well, however, to remember that the word *Gemeinschaft*, or *society*, was the term in common use, a word signifying an association, but not necessarily a church. The word "society" appeared for a long time in the Discipline, but has gradually been displaced by the word "church."

Mr. Spayth's remark that these rules governed the Church up to 1815 is, in the main, yet perhaps not strictly, accurate. In general, we are to accept his statements as authoritative, he having been the earliest historian of the Church, contemporaneous with much of which he writes, and a member of the first General Conference, in 1815. Anything he has written is to be held as doubtful only where clear evidence, as derived from original manuscripts, is to the contrary. In the present instance it is apparent that there was some growth or development from this early simple form, beginning perhaps about 1809. In 1813 a definitely formed book of discipline seems to have been in existence, since, at a

<sup>1</sup>Spayth's *History*, pp. 145-147.



session of the Eastern Conference held that year, it was resolved "that the Confession of Faith and the Christian Discipline of the United Brethren in Christ be printed." Up to this time the Confession of Faith and Rules of Discipline existed only in manuscript form.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. THE SECOND FORMAL CONFERENCE—1791.

In the year 1790 no formal conference was held. This was not deemed necessary, as the early conferences were not held for the purpose of arranging and assigning to ministers the work to be done. That end was usually accomplished at the "great meetings," or at two-day meetings, or whenever several ministers happened to be present at any assemblage with the leaders of the work. The conferences seem rather to have been held for the higher purpose of mutual understanding as to the general basis of their proceeding. Gradually, without their having willed it, a church was forming under their hands. The ministers, as well as the people, were brought together from different and widely varying communions. Their work was evangelistic, but numerous congregations separate from any other church relations were formed. It was necessary that they should meet occasionally for consultation, and especially that the later accessions of younger men to their ministry should be led to a clear understanding of the work they were engaged in. With this view a second formal conference was held, in the year 1791. This assembly was held eight miles from York, Pennsylvania, at the home of Mr. John Spangler, who, as Dr. Drury remarks, "was a large land-holder and sub-

<sup>1</sup> For a full view of the early Book of Discipline of the Church, including the Confession and Disciplinary Rules, see the recently published volume of the "Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841," including the German originals and literal English translations, with an Introduction by Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D. The volume is one of highest value from many standpoints.

stantial citizen." In church connection he and his family were German Reformed, but they had been swept in with the current of the great revival, and their sympathies and fellowship were with the ministers of the movement. Hence they gladly opened their doors to entertain the conference.

At this conference were present William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, George A. Guething, Christian Newcomer, Adam Lehman, John Ernst, John G. Pfrimmer, John Neidig, and Benedict Sanders. The following ministers were absent: Henry Weidner, Henry Baker, Martin Crider, F. Schaffer, Christopher Grosch, Abraham Draksel, Christian Crum, G. Fortenbach, Daniel Strickler, J. Hershey, Simon Herre, J. Hautz, and Benedict Schwope. Thus we find twenty-two names as constituting the list of the ministers at this time. That there should be a rather wide disproportion between those present and those absent, is not a source of surprise, or indication of indifference. The ministers resided in three different States, the modes of travel were slow and tedious, and since there was as yet no organized itinerancy no one was led to attend by any interest in the question as to where his next field of labor should be.

No formal conference was again held until the year 1800, the ministers meanwhile preaching here and there according to plans agreed upon at the various meetings, as already remarked.

## CHAPTER VIII

### NEWCOMER AND ASSOCIATES

#### I. CHRISTIAN NEWCOMER.

It will be in order here, before passing, to take note of some others of these early laborers who were associated with Bishops Otterbein and Boehm in the founding of the United Brethren Church. Next to these two, with Guething, stands Christian Newcomer, the third bishop of the Church, who, in the constancy and extent of his travels, almost takes rank with Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of whom it might be said, with slight exaggeration, that he was seldom out of his saddle, except to eat, to sleep, to preach, or to hold a conference.

Mr. Newcomer was, on his father's side, of Swiss descent, the family having come to America in the father's childhood days. Their home was established in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in a community of Mennonites, of which society they were members. Here his father, Wolfgang Newcomer, was married to Miss Elizabeth Weller, who was also of the Mennonite Church. In his autobiography, or "Journal," Mr. Newcomer relates that they were devoted people, and that oftentimes he saw them kneeling together in silent prayer. In their family of eight children, three sons and five daughters, Christian was the second born of the three sons. His birth occurred on January 21, old style, that is, January 9, 1749, or three years before Mr. Otterbein's arrival in America.

The tenor of his life shows that he was a man of cheerful and sunny disposition, but he was also piously inclined from his childhood. He tells us that when he was very young the Spirit of the Lord strove with him. Like the boy Samuel, he did not comprehend the meaning of the voice, but in his heart he desired to live a pious life. Whenever he was in company with persons who were reputed to be pious, he felt rising within him a strong desire to be like them. He listened with eagerness to the conversation of older persons bearing on the subject of religion, and reflected with serious thoughtfulness upon what they said.

Some of the experiences he relates are full of suggestiveness for the present time, when conversions so often seem scarcely to reach the deeper springs of the heart. When he had advanced well toward maturity, he read the Holy Scriptures with deepening interest. Of this period he says: "In the meantime the grace of God continued to work powerfully in my heart. . . . Frequently did I endeavor to pray, in my ignorance of the plan of salvation; willingly would I believe and persuade myself that I was one of the happy number which are saved. I soon made the discovery, however, that I still continued in the captivity of sin and Satan." An incident which shows the strong trend of his convictions and feelings at this time is thus related: "I remember once being in a field at work, when the grace of God wrought such powerful conviction in my heart that I went down on my knees in a hollow place in the field, crying to the Lord, and saying, 'O thou blessed Saviour, I will cheerfully believe in thee, for thou art my Redeemer, and I am the purchase of thy most precious blood.'" Then followed a conflict with doubt, and he was not yet consciously saved.

These spiritual struggles continued for some time, when

by and by he realized for a time unutterable peace with God. When darkness came again, he sought advice from a minister in the Mennonite Church. "He counseled me," he says, "to be baptized, to join the society, and take the sacrament. I took his friendly advice, . . . but all this did not restore to me the joyful sensation or inward comfort which I had lost. True, I was not accused, nor did any person even insinuate anything derogatory to my religion, but I knew and felt a deficiency of something within." And thus several years passed, when at last he obtained the victory of faith, and was moved with an irresistible desire to communicate his experience to others. In this state he visited a Mennonite minister, to whom he "related with all the fervor of a new convert" the work of grace which had been accomplished in his soul. The minister, having no acquaintance with a like experience, expressed doubts about it all, and Mr. Newcomer returned to his home in sore temptation lest after all he might be mistaken, since this good man, in whose piety and wisdom he had the fullest confidence, could not coincide with him. Later on came another victory, when he resolved to visit the minister again. He found him lying on a bed of sickness, and soon, to his great joy, the minister referred to their previous conversation, and he found that the words he had spoken had proved "as a nail driven in a sure place."

But now came the conviction that he should tell his neighbors and fellow church people of his experience of the grace of God in his heart. This meant a call to the ministry of the gospel of Jesus, and now there must needs be another great and protracted struggle before he could yield obedience to the high behest. Meanwhile, having entered into the marriage relation, he removed with his family to Maryland, and it was on a visit to the old home



and the old church in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, that he made the first distinct public avowal of his new and blessed spiritual experience. The meeting in the church and his part in the service he thus describes: "I accompanied my friends to the meeting-house, not with an intention to say anything, but, on the contrary, with a resolution to be silent. Sitting for some time, listening with attention to the discourse and exhortations of several of their speakers, I could perceive distinctly that they still continued in the same ignorance and inexperience of religion as they were when I left them. It now ran like fire through my bones; I felt inwardly constrained to take up the cross; and whereas brethren (namely, the Menonites) gave the privilege or liberty to speak, I dared not remain silent any longer. I arose with a sorrowful heart, and spoke with tears in my eyes to my old friends and acquaintances. I related to them, with all the ability in my possession, how I had oftentimes felt at meeting, when living yet among them; candidly stated my experience of the work of grace in my soul before I left them, as also what the Lord, in his infinite mercy, had done for me since my removal to Maryland. I also sincerely confessed to them that the Lord had required of me, before my removal, to warn them of their danger, and that until this day I had been disobedient to my blessed Master. I was so affected as to be hardly able to speak intelligibly; but I stammered as well as I could, and endeavored to recommend to them the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Every person present was sensibly touched. All shed tears, as well as myself, and I have no doubt many were convinced that a form of religion, a religion that . . . is not felt in the heart, is insufficient to salvation. After discharging this duty I felt glad that I had been obedient, and an inward satisfaction rested on my mind." From

this time forward, Mr. Newcomer tells us, he was frequently asked to speak publicly on the subject of a deeper religious experience. To these calls he responded with hesitation, but in the spirit of obedience.

It was apparently soon after this that he became acquainted with Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Guething, of whom he speaks as ministers of the Reformed Church, and who preached frequently in the neighborhood where he resided in Maryland. Of these men he says: "Endowed by God, they preached powerfully, and not as the scribes. Their discourses made uncommon impressions on the hearts of the hearers. They insisted on the necessity of genuine repentance and conversion, on the knowledge of a pardon of sin, and in consequence thereof a change of heart and renovation of spirit. Many secure and unconcerned sinners were, by their instrumentality, awakened from their sleep of sin and death—many converted from darkness to light, from the power of sin and Satan unto God. They soon collected many adherents to and followers of the doctrines which they preached, from the multitude that congregated to hear them. Those persons who held to and embraced these doctrines were by them formed into societies, and were called Otterbein's people, and the worldly-minded gave them the nickname 'Dutch Methodists,' " which in those days was considered a name of reproach.

Mr. Newcomer next informs us that, finding that the doctrines preached by these apostles harmonized with his own conceptions of the doctrines of Jesus Christ, he joined himself to them and their society. In order to take this step without creating friction among his Mennonite brethren, he formally withdrew from their communion. The date of this change of relation is not given, but as he was present at the historic initial Conference of 1789, in

the Otterbein parsonage in Baltimore, his connection with Otterbein and his co-laborers is probably to be placed some years before that event. Incidentally, he makes the remark that "the work of grace now spread very rapidly among the German population in the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania. From every quarter resounded the call, 'Come over and help us.' The harvest was great, and the laborers few."

Mr. Newcomer, like most of these earlier evangelists of the Church, followed a secular occupation during all of the earlier part of his life, and, indeed, after he gave himself fully to the ministry of the word, and during the rest of his life, his earthly support came from his own material resources. His attention to the requirements of his business was often suddenly interrupted for days, and even weeks, at a time. Of this feature of his earlier ministerial work he makes this record: "It was frequently required of me by my brethren to attend meetings that were appointed by the people without my knowledge. On such occasions I often had to leave home and travel a hundred or more miles to attend a two- or three-days' meeting, which occasioned a considerable loss of time and neglect of my occupation. This also required a great degree of self-denial, and many a sore conflict. . . . But I had to submit, and be obedient to God and the brethren, . . . and I felt such a burning desire in my heart for the salvation of poor sinners that I gave all thoughts of self-interest as chaff to the wind by simply saying to myself that the salvation of one precious soul is worth more than the possession of the whole world."

It was about this time that he was pressed to fill several appointments for a brother minister, thus meeting an experience that illustrates his character alike for fidelity and shrinking bashfulness. He started early and

was in time to meet an afternoon appointment. When his service closed, a colored man brought a request to him to visit a young lady who was supposed to be dying. The place was two miles distant. On reaching the place, he was ushered into a rich man's elegant mansion. He found the young lady very ill, with apparently no possible hope of recovery, and the parents and friends weeping about her couch. He spoke to her, but in her extremity she was unable to answer him. He then sang a few verses, and knelt in prayer. In the act of prayer, he tells us, he had such freedom and power as he had never before experienced. On rising, he bade her farewell, again commending her to God, with no thought that he should ever see her again in the present world, and then went on to reach an evening appointment. A few months later he had an appointment again to preach in the house where the colored servant had met him. On entering, the host informed him that his appointment had been transferred to another house, the home of the young lady to whom he had ministered on his previous visit. He hesitated greatly to go to this mansion of elegance and wealth to preach, and the more so since the request was made that he preach in the English language, of which he had but imperfect knowledge. But there was no other way than to go. In the preaching he experienced a special endowment of the Holy Spirit, and he declared the word with great freedom. His audience was strongly moved, and as he proceeded a lady arose and began to utter loud shouts of praise to God. To his great surprise and delight he presently understood that it was the same young lady whom he had visited in her sickness. The people present were greatly moved, and Mr. Newcomer had reason to believe that the meeting was blessed to a number of them in their salvation.



Mr. Spayth, who had the advantage of a personal acquaintance with nearly all of the early ministers of the Church, says of Mr. Newcomer: "He indeed was a chosen vessel of the Lord, as his subsequent labors most amply prove. Though in some respects less than Otterbein, Guething, or Boehm, . . . we are justified in saying of him that the grace of God was not bestowed on him in vain, for he labored more abundantly, journeyed more, preached more frequently, and visited more extensively. He was just the man, by nature and by grace, for his place—without him the cluster would have been incomplete; tall in stature, of a commanding figure, and a keen visage, a voice moderately strong, and if at times impeded for a moment by some natural defect, it but heightened the effect of his preaching, drawing the attention of the audience only nearer to the speaker, affording him an opportunity to draw the gospel net more effectually around them, and thus secure a larger draft. From first to last, and for many years, Brother Newcomer made good proof of his ministry, in all things showing himself a pattern of good works. . . . He was successful in winning souls to Christ, and unremitting in his labors, being often and suddenly called upon to attend meetings appointed without his knowledge, to reach some of which he had to travel one hundred and more miles. These protracted meetings, with all other meetings which he attended, required much time, neglect of business at home, beside traveling expenses; and this was done without receiving the least remuneration. To do this required on his part much self-denial and sacrifice of domestic interests, which brought him often into great straits and sore conflicts. But . . . his burning zeal would give him no rest, in season or out of season—neither in summer nor winter. He was sometimes heard to say, 'Well, this is



hard, but the salvation of one soul outweighs it all—let me go.’ Often he was compelled to make forced rides, to expose his person in the most inclement season of the year, and the stages of high water; but none of these things could check him in his course. The writer, when traveling Susquehanna Circuit, in the year 1812, in the depth of winter, of cold and snow, had a meeting in Berks County. While preaching, Brother Newcomer’s tall figure made its appearance at the door. I beckoned to him to come to the stand, but the room being crowded he remained where he was, and without leaving the door closed the meeting with a very impressive exhortation, and sang and prayed. I pronounced the benediction. The audience made a move to leave. Now was Newcomer’s time; he shook hands with one and then with another, addressing some by name, exhorting all, young and old, with a voice and visage as spiritual and holy as if he had just come from the court of heaven. Many began to weep, and we had a gracious and powerful blessing. Thus often, when it was thought that he was far away, he would come upon meetings unexpectedly and unlooked for, but his coming was everywhere and always hailed with joy. For of a truth God was with him, and had made him a blessing to the Church and to the people.”<sup>1</sup>

We are to hear further of Mr. Newcomer, as bishop and leader of the host after the departure of the first chief shepherds, Otterbein, Boehm, and Guething, to their eternal rest.

## II. ABRAHAM DRAKSEL.

Another found among the fellow-laborers of Mr. Otterbein, though not present at the initial Conference of

<sup>1</sup> Spayth’s *History*, pp. 67-69.

1789, was Abraham Draksel, who has been called the "silenced Amish preacher." Mr. Draksel was born in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, in 1753. His parents were members of the society known as Amish, which derived its name from Jacob Amen, a native of Amenthal, Switzerland. They are a seceded branch of the Mennonite Church, but more rigid in the observance of outward forms, and insisting on greater simplicity in dress, the men, for example, being required to wear hooks instead of buttons; hence also called the "Hooker Mennonites." Mr. Draksel was an obedient and faithful son, and became a member of the church of his parents. In due time he was encouraged to take part in preaching the gospel among them. This was according to the custom of the Mennonites, among whom there were no ordained nor paid ministers, members more gifted than others being chosen, usually by lot, to expound the word. But Mr. Draksel's preaching made a deeper impression upon his own conscience than it did upon the consciences of his hearers. He came to feel the need of a deeper heart experience and found his prayers answered. He began to tell his brethren of the grace he had found, urging them to seek a like blessing, this in the belief that they would gladly hear his words. On the contrary, opposition was awakened, and after being three times notified by the elders that he must desist from that kind of preaching, he was officially visited and informed that he was henceforth silenced as a minister among them. This announcement was accepted by him without resistance, and he joined himself thenceforth to the ministers who, with Mr. Otterbein, were preaching a living gospel.

Mr. Spayth, in speaking of Mr. Draksel, says: "His gospel labors proved a blessing to many, and spread much by his energetic efforts in the cause of God. In the year

1804 he removed with his family west of the Alleghany Mountains, and settled himself near Mount Pleasant, in Westmoreland County. From here he made frequent visits into the State of Ohio. Brother Draksel's name will long live, and be cherished by many in and out of the Church. His life was blameless. His countenance was an index of the grace and spirit that dwelt within. With his fine silvery beard, he resembled the patriarchs of old. He was a pattern of piety, a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men. His end was joy and peace."<sup>1</sup> In the month of February, 1825, he entered into rest, at the age of seventy-two years, having been a minister in the United Brethren Church for forty-three years.

### III. JOHN JACOB PFRIMMER.

Of two others of this early period, members of the second conference, that of 1791, Mr. Spayth has left us sketches from his personal recollections. The first of these was John Jacob Pfrimmer. Mr. Pfrimmer was born in Alsace, France, in 1762, and was brought up in the German Reformed Church. He came to Pennsylvania at the age of twenty-six, in 1788, and soon after found the grace which Otterbein experienced during his ministry in Lancaster. Ere long he felt upon his heart the burden of a call to the ministry, and being well educated, and of sincere Christian life, his fitness for the sacred calling was readily recognized. He possessed strong intellectual gifts, was a fluent speaker, and declared the word in a deeply impressive manner. He had a broad knowledge of the Scriptures, and knew how to wield effectively the sword of the Spirit. He was fond of clinching his utterances with an emphatic "Thus saith the Lord," properly attributing all authority to the divine Word. He preached

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 161.

the gospel widely, first in eastern Pennsylvania, then in the Susquehanna Valley, and afterward, in 1800, he crossed the mountains, and remained for some years in Somerset, Westmoreland, and Washington counties. In 1808 he removed farther westward, finally settling near Corydon, in Harrison County, Indiana, where for a time he was associate judge of the court. He became a member of the Miami Conference, which was organized in 1810, the first west of the Alleghanies, and which for a number of years embraced all the country west of the Scioto Valley. He was ordained in 1815, and was a member of the General Conference of 1825. His death seems to have occurred soon afterward, his demise being placed in the necrological list for the same year. His ministry, according to Mr. Spayth, was widely fruitful in blessed results. "As a result of his labors a church was built in 1818, in his neighborhood, on ground owned by his son. It was the first United Brethren church built west of the Ohio."<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. JOHN NEIDIG.

The second of these men whose names first appear in connection with the Conference of 1791, was John Neidig. He was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, in 1765, but brought up in the neighborhood of Harrisburg, on a farm to which his father removed soon after his birth. His parents were of the Mennonite Church. Being seriously disposed, he was received by baptism into the same communion at an early age. His exemplary life and thoughtful habits commended him to the confidence of his brethren, and at the age of twenty-five he was chosen by lot, after the custom of the Mennonite Church, to be a preacher. With this responsibility laid upon him he

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 235.



felt deeply the need of a heart purified from sin, and of an abiding sense of experimental salvation. His earnest prayers for this grace were answered, and his soul was made to rejoice in the witness of the Spirit. And now, as did others before him who found a deeper significance in the gospel than the observance of external forms, he began to preach to his brethren the need of the same divine blessing. He insisted strongly on the doctrine of the new birth. This was a kind of preaching his brethren neither expected nor desired. In one instance, as related by Mr. Spayth, "whilst he was preaching and exhorting with much feeling, many in the congregation began to be moved, and some were crying loud enough to be heard. The old preacher [of the congregation] caught young Neidig by the arm, saying: 'Oh, not so, brother! You press the subject too far!' To this he quietly replied: 'There is no stopping this side of heaven. I will press it yet more earnestly.'"

Mr. Spayth warms up to a fine glow as he proceeds with a personal description of Mr. Neidig. "Of all the brethren we have yet [spoken of] or may hereafter notice, Brother Neidig was the Nathanael; a man possessed of an excellent spirit, meek, gentle, just, having a good report of them that were without; as a steward of God, blameless; as a teacher, he was able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. The virtues and the graces so essential in an elder in the church of God shone all around him with a clear and steady light; . . . that light and those virtues and graces, shedding so much luster around his path, were never beclouded nor suffered a momentary eclipse by any false step on his part in his long and eventful life. His language was select and chaste, in the pulpit and out of it. . . . The sweetness of his voice . . . was like the chiming of silver bells. . . .



As a builder of the Church . . . the materials in his hands were gold, and silver, and precious stones. If a meeting-house or church was to be dedicated, be it Lutheran, German Reformed, or otherwise, Brother Neidig received the most friendly invitation to participate in the services and solemnities thereof. . . . His fame was in all the churches."

And yet this man, continues Mr. Spayth, "such as he was, be it remembered, or rather in charity be it forgotten, the Mennonite Church thrust out from among them, as it had thrust Boehm."

Mr. Neidig gave his long life with unremitting diligence to the service of his holy calling, continuing to preach almost to the last hour of his life. He reached the seventy-ninth year of his age, and the fifty-third of his ministry, before he laid his armor down to enter into the rest of the faithful. But a few days before the Master called him a friend said to him, "Brother Neidig, will you allow yourself no rest?" With tenderness of heart he made the characteristic reply, "I do wish not to be found idle when the Lord cometh."

Among others who were greatly esteemed for their part in the work was Christian Crum, who was born near Frederick City, in Maryland, but lived subsequently in Virginia, preaching extensively. He was of German Reformed parentage. His death occurred in 1823. John Hershey, whose name is usually found among those present at the conferences, was of Mennonite birth. His home was at Hagerstown, Maryland, where his strength as a servant of the Church was fully recognized.

## THIRD PERIOD—1800-1815

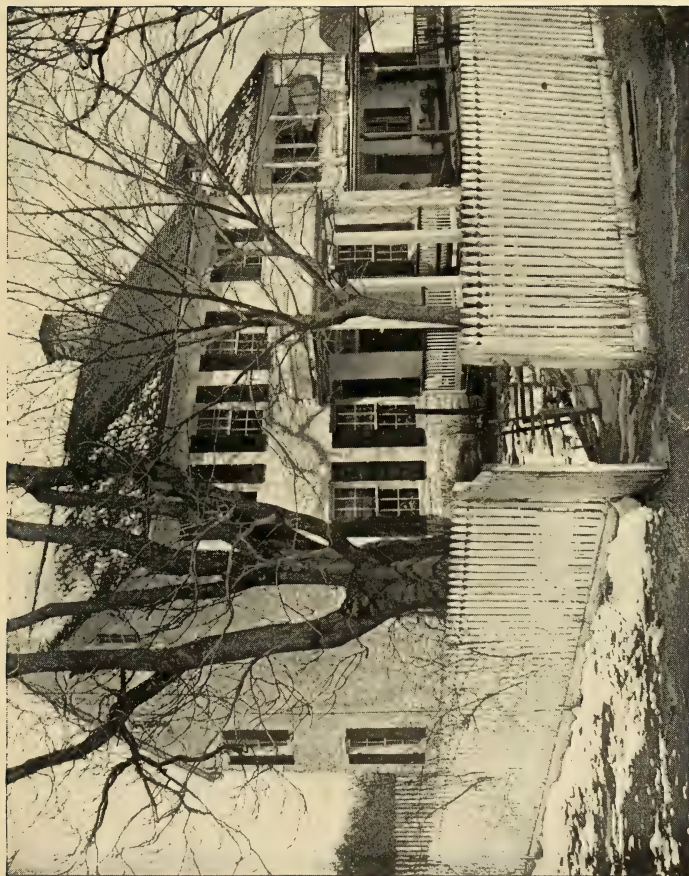
### CHAPTER IX

#### THE CONFERENCE OF 1800

##### I. ITS IMPORTANCE.

THE Conference of 1800, considered in relation to the progressive development of the Church, is to be regarded as one of the most important in its history. While it did not bear the name, it yet possessed the essential character of a General Conference, in the fact that it exercised the proper functions of such an assembly. One question, especially, of gravest import, was determined by it, such as could properly be determined only by a General Conference. It framed and settled in perpetuity the name of the denomination, a step which could only be taken by a body possessing the highest and final jurisdiction. Moreover, it elected bishops in a formal manner, another step which was not taken by either of the preceding conferences. But, as a simple fact, the conference was representative of the entire Church, so far as the body which had been collected and organized could be called a church.

The conference was held on September 25 and 26, at the house of Peter Kemp, a little more than two miles west of Frederick City, Maryland. The house, a substantial stone structure, is still standing, and is a commodious and comfortable farm-house. Newcomer's Journal, in the usual form of the brief entries in his diary, makes the



HOME OF REV. PETER KEMP.



following note: "25th. This morning we set out early; came to Brother Peter Kemp's, where the conference is to be held; found Father Otterbein, Boehm, and twelve other preachers there. The conference was opened with singing and prayer by Otterbein and Boehm. The former gave a powerful exhortation. Then were all the brethren present separately examined respecting their progress in the divine life, their success and industry in the ministry. 26th. This forenoon Father Otterbein preached from Amos 4:12. Boehm spoke after him. After transacting some other business the conference closed with prayer."

Such is the very brief and very incomplete form in which a most important statement is couched. It is unsatisfying, because we naturally want to know much more about this early conference than is now possible to be known, and we would anxiously look for information from the pen of one who participated in the proceedings, and who subsequently himself became so important a figure in the rising Church. But the statement, brief as it is, possesses yet the greatest value as fixing the fact of the occurrence of a historic event, and settling both its time and place. It also indicates with equal distinctness who were the recognized leaders of the conference, as of the great movement itself which this conference represented. Otterbein and Boehm were found there by Newcomer when he arrived. The session of the first day was opened by Otterbein and Boehm, the former giving a powerful exhortation. In the forenoon of the next day Otterbein preached to the conference and Boehm spoke after him. These were the men who stood at the front of the movement, had been from the beginning its providential, though not formally elected, bishops, and now were in due order by election recognized in that office.



## II. MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE.

The minutes of the conference were themselves also recorded in briefest form, but contemporaneous sources furnish interesting confirmatory information. These minutes, with those of the succeeding conferences, up to 1830, and including those of the General Conferences of 1815 and 1817, are happily preserved, and are found in the fire-proof vaults of the Church Publishing House, at Dayton, Ohio.

The ministers who were present at this conference were the following: Otterbein, Boehm, Guething, Pfrimmer, Newcomer, Lehman, Draksel, Christian Crum, Henry Crum, John Hershey, J. Geisinger, Henry Boehm, D. Aurandt, and Jacob Baulus. Those absent were: Schaffer, Crider, Grosch, Neidig, Abraham Mayer, G. Fortenbach, David Snyder, Adam Riegel, A. Hershey, Christian Hershey, John Ernst, of Pennsylvania; Thomas Winters, M. Thomas, of Maryland; Simon Herre, Daniel Strickler, John Senseny, Abraham Hiestand, and I. Niswander, of Virginia.

The reader will be pleased here to see a transcript of the minutes of some of these early conferences. Of the first conference, that of 1800, the whole record, after the mention of the time and place and of the members present as just given, is embodied in four short paragraphs. They are recorded in the German language, of which the following is a translation:

Every preacher spoke first in regard to his own experience, and then declared his intention to continue to preach, by the assisting grace of God, in full earnest, to the honor of God and the blessing of mankind.

*Resolved*, That two preachers shall be appointed to investigate the case of D. Aurandt, as to his authority to administer baptism and the Lord's supper.

*Resolved*, That annually a day shall be appointed on which the

unsectarian preachers shall assemble together and counsel how they can become more useful in their office, so that the church of God may be built up, sinners converted unto God, and God glorified.

The conference was opened with prayer, the reading of a chapter, and a short exhortation by Brother Otterbein, and closed with prayer.

### III. THE PRESENT NAME OF THE CHURCH ADOPTED.

Preceding this record and the other minutes which follow, is a brief prefatory remark, answering as a kind of title-page to the whole: "Here now follow what, from the year 1800, the United Brotherhood in Christ Jesus—until 1800 the United [*die Vereinigte*—have done in their annual conferences for the government of preachers and church members." Upon the language of this preface it is proper to remark that the name *die Vereinigte*, meaning simply "the United," or "the Unified," was an abbreviated appellation for *die Vereinigte Brüder*, or "the United Brethren." Upon this name Dr. Drury, in his Life of Otterbein, has the following valuable note, quite worthy of being here transcribed:

"Many other names were also in use; as *die Freiheits Leute* (the Liberty People), *die Gemeinde* (the Church), *die Allgemeine Brüderschaft* (the General Brotherhood), *die Neu Reformirte* (the New Reformed), *die Neu Mennoniten* (the New Mennonites), *die Brüder* (the Brethren), *die Böhmische* (Boehm's Followers), *die Otterbeinianer* (the Otterbeinians), and *die Unpartheischen* (the Unsectarian). Some of these designations would include all of the societies, and, on the other hand, some of them were used, in particular cases, in regard to societies that sustained only a fraternal relation to the United Brethren. There were also circles of Mennonites that were called by the name of the minister through whom they were awakened, as the *Landis Leute* (Landis' People), and the *Lichtes Leute* (Light's People, the followers of Felix Light, who began to preach

between 1800 and 1803). Through the course of forty years these semi-independent Mennonite circles were breaking into the widening circle of the United Brethren. Thus the Mennonite contribution was greatly enlarged. After the death of the pioneer preachers the lines on the Reformed side, owing to a reviving church-spirit, became sufficiently rigid to materially lessen the accessions from that quarter. In consequence of this waning importance of Reformed elements, some, by failing to look back to the earlier times, fail to recognize the real position and importance of Otterbein.”<sup>1</sup>

It will impress the reader as a rather singular circumstance that in these official minutes of the Conference of 1800 no reference is made to either of the two transactions which gave to the conference its distinguished place in historic importance. The first omission relates to the official adoption of a name for the Church. We have just seen that the society, or collection of societies, was known by several designations, as might be suggested by local circumstances. But here a definite and distinct name was adopted which has continued to be the official name of the Church since that day, that is, The United Brethren in Christ. Have we, then, in the absence of any statement in the official record, any undoubted proof of this fact? One source of proof is the distinct tradition which has been handed down from the fathers. There are many now living who in their earlier life had acquaintance with those who saw Otterbein and the men who coöperated with him, as, for example, Bishop Joseph Hoffman,—who was ordained by Otterbein, and succeeded him as pastor of the old church in Baltimore on the death of the Bishop,—the elder Bishop Henry Kumler, and others, whose testimony on this point was often repeated. But

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, p. 275.

there is also the written testimony of the Rev. H. G. Spayth, who was a member of the first General Conference, just fifteen years later, and secretary of that body. Mr. Spayth was personally acquainted with nearly all, if not all, of the men who sat in the Conference of 1800. Otterbein, Boehm, Guething, Newcomer, Draksel, Pfrimmer, and others were to him familiar names. His statement, therefore, is to be accepted as final authority upon this point. That the reader may see Mr. Spayth's own language, the precise record is here reproduced :

"At this conference, there being a good representation of the Church in general, the name 'United Brethren,' with the addition 'in Christ,' was adopted. The appellative 'United Brethren' had characterized the Brethren as a distinct body of Christians for a considerable time previous to the sitting of this conference. But it was suggested (and not without reason) that the name 'United Brethren,' when used in papers of record pertaining to the Church, in property, bequests, legacies, or otherwise, might raise a legal inquiry as to who or what church was intended by 'United Brethren,' forasmuch as the Moravians, under Count Zinzendorf, in 1727, had formed their first society under and by the name 'United Brethren,' or *Unitas Fratrum*. To avoid a misapplication in consequence of the similarity of the name, which it was now too late to change, 'in Christ' was added, and since then [the name] has been written and known as *The Church of the United Brethren in Christ*."<sup>1</sup>

A third source of proof that the name was adopted by this Conference of 1800, is found in the Discipline of 1815. In the historical statement which precedes the body proper of the Discipline, the record is made: "In order now to labor in a truly useful and church-like way, the preachers

<sup>1</sup>Spayth's *History*, pp. 82, 83.



saw themselves obliged to appoint a conference where they might come together to unite themselves properly ; because some were Reformed, others Lutherans, others Mennonites, etc. They therefore appointed the 25th of September, 1800, . . . for the conference. There came together thirteen preachers, who united themselves into a society which bears the name 'The United Brethren in Christ.' They elected William Otterbein and Martin Boehm as superintendents or bishops."<sup>1</sup>

The date of this Discipline is so near to that of the conference which adopted the name as to leave no possible room for doubt. Whatever, in the extreme brevity of the official minutes of the conference, may be omitted from their pages, the fact concerning the adoption of the name at that time is here fully established. A copy of this very Discipline, now so interesting and valuable because it is the first Discipline printed, is preserved in the fire-proof vaults of the Church Publishing House, at Dayton. It is printed in the German language, and bears on its title-page the imprint "Hagerstown: . . . 1816."

#### IV. ELECTION OF BISHOPS.

The second important step taken by this conference was the formal election of bishops. The Church had not, indeed, been without a bishop or bishops, as Mr. Spayth very justly observes. Otterbein, as chief, and Boehm, as almost equal associate, had exercised with the utmost care and fidelity the prerogatives of chief shepherds, though not elected by any actual vote to the office. Their function, like that of Peter among his brethren in the earlier apostolic days, had been fully recognized. But the time had come when it seemed proper by an actual official act to recognize them in the relation

<sup>1</sup> See *Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841*, p. 10.



they had until now informally sustained, and accordingly these two leaders were at this conference, with due formality, elected bishops. Here again the record made by Mr. Spayth may with propriety be quoted:

"The next step the conference took was to elect two brethren to the office of superintendent, or bishop, and William Otterbein and Martin Boehm were elected. By this it is not to be understood that the Church had been without a chief. The office of superintendent had been exercised by Otterbein up to this time,—not by right of election or choice, but by the force of circumstances inseparably connected with the rise and progress of the Church. All eyes had been directed to him to lead in counsel. The preachers, not one excepted, paid this deference to him. The care of all the churches had been resting upon him, and such were the love and obedience to him that if he said to one, 'Go,' he went, and if to another, 'Come,' he came."<sup>1</sup>

But other evidence comes from additional sources which fully sustains the record of Mr. Spayth both as to the fact and the significance of this election. The first is the statement found in the official minutes of the first General Conference, in 1815, whose members were largely the same men who were in the Conference of 1800. On this point see the paragraph just quoted from the first printed Discipline, where the election of Otterbein and Boehm as superintendents or bishops is distinctly affirmed.

Still another source of evidence is found in the writings of Henry Boehm, who was a member of the Conference of 1800. Henry Boehm, who, as a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, rounded up a full century of life, was a son of Bishop Martin Boehm. He was attracted to the Methodist Church by the greater thorough-

<sup>1</sup>Spayth's *History*, p. 83.

ness of its organization at that time, and was for many years the traveling companion of Bishop Asbury. He began keeping a diary as early as 1800, and from the notes in this he makes in his later book of "Reminiscences" the remark concerning this conference: "They [the United Brethren] elected bishops for the first time. William Otterbein and Martin Boehm (my father) were unanimously chosen."<sup>1</sup>

One more direct proof of the formal election of Otterbein and Boehm as bishops will suffice. It is found in the official record of the minutes of the Conference of 1802, as follows:

"*Resolved*, That in case one of our superintendents—W. Otterbein and Martin Boehm—should die, another one in his place shall always be appointed. This is the wish of these two brethren, and the unanimous wish of all the preachers present."

Thus passed into history this third formal assembling of the early ministers of the Church, so simple in all its characteristics, and yet so important in its historic significance. The Church was to bear henceforth a name which should distinguish it from all other religious bodies, and it was also organized for the more effective prosecution of the high mission to which God providentially appointed it.

<sup>1</sup> Boehm's *Reminiscences*, pp. 55, 56.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CONFERENCES OF 1801-1814

#### I. THE CONFERENCE OF 1801.

THE Conference of 1801 was also held at the home of Rev. Peter Kemp, commencing on September 23, and extending through the 24th and 25th. Nineteen preachers were present. All those in attendance at the Conference of 1800 were present at this session, except Pfrimmer, Henry Boehm, Draksel, and Lehman. The new names appearing in the list of those present were Daniel Strickler, Peter Senseny, Frederick Schaffer, John Neidig, A. Mayer, D. Snyder, M. Thomas, A. Hershey, D. Long, Thomas Winters, L. Duckwald, Peter Kemp, and M. Kessler. On the first evening, says Newcomer in his Journal, a meeting of gracious power was held in a neighboring house. The mother of the family and several others were converted to God. Thus did these early ministers turn every occasion to good account in preaching Christ as the Saviour of sinners and in seeking to win them to eternal life. The second day appears to have been a busy one, many different topics being under consideration. Newcomer remarks upon the brotherly spirit manifested among the brethren. "General unanimity," he says, "of love prevailed." Of the third day he says: "Father Otterbein preached this day with uncommon perspicuity and power. His text was in the Epistle of Jude. The force with which he pointed out the greatness, the importance, and responsibility of the ministerial office, will never be forgotten by me."

At this conference a resolution was adopted requiring each preacher, after preaching, to hold a conversation with those who might be seeking the conversion of their souls. The form of the resolution is an index of the common fact of those times, that ministers expected to find inquirers after almost any sermon. The prevailing type of the preaching looked toward the immediate conviction and conversion of sinners. Another resolution was adopted which instructed the preachers to be brief in speaking, and to avoid all superfluous words in their prayers and sermons. If, however, the Holy Spirit should manifestly lead to greater length, it was equally their duty to follow the divine direction.

Something was done at this conference toward forming more distinctly a regular itinerancy, and we find the names of ten men who consented to travel as directed, as follows: Christian Newcomer, David Snyder, M. Thomas, Abraham Hershey, Daniel Strickler, Abraham Mayer, Frederick Schaffer, David Long, John Neidig, and Peter Kemp.

## II. THE CONFERENCE OF 1802.

At the Conference of 1802 there were thirteen ministers present. Mr. Newcomer, in his Journal, says: "October 5th—To-day we set off for our conference. Came to Peter Kemp's, where Father Otterbein had already arrived. Here we tarried together for the night. 6th—To-day our conference commenced at John Cronise's, with singing and prayer by Father Boehm. Otterbein addressed the brethren in his usual manner."

The entire minutes of this session are here given, as they appear in a liberal translation. It will be observed that the secretary has acquired a better idea of what conference minutes should be, and they are recorded at greater length.

Conference met at the house of John Cronise, Frederick County, Maryland, October 6, 1802. The following members were present: William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, Christian Newcomer, John Hershey, Christopher Grosch, Abraham Draksel, Henry Crum, Michael Thomas, Dietrich Aurandt, David Snyder, Peter Kemp, Mathias Kessler, George A. Guething.

Conference was opened with singing and prayer. O Lord, let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Grant to thy ministering servants grace to love thee above all. Amen.

The preachers present were examined in regard to their character and usefulness.

*Resolved*, To give to Valentine Huegel license to exhort.

*Resolved*, To write to Pfrimmer that for the present we will have nothing to do with him.

Brothers Ludwig Duckwald and William Ambrose, from Sleepy Creek, Virginia, arrived at conference.

Conference met October 7. Sermon preached by William Otterbein from Heb. 13: 17. Exhortation by M. Boehm.

Brother John Miller obtained license from the conference to exhort.

In regard to the keeping of a register of the names of the private members, it was found that out of twelve votes nine were against the motion. So, with consent, the matter was dropped.

It shall be the duty of preachers to keep up prayer-meetings at their appointments, wherever it is possible.

Permission was given to Ludwig Duckwald to baptize and administer the Lord's supper, according to the Word of God.

Some proposals were made in regard to the collecting of a certain sum of money for our poor preachers.

*Resolved*, That if any of our preachers shall do anything wrong, it shall be the duty of the preacher next (or nearest) to him to talk to him privately in relation to the wrong. If he does not listen to him, or accept his advice, he shall take with him one or two more preachers; and if he does not listen to them, he shall be silenced until the next session of conference.

*Resolved*, That G. A. Guething shall, next spring and fall, visit the congregations on Frederick Circuit.

*Resolved*, That Christian Newcomer shall visit Cumberland Circuit twice during next year.

*Resolved*, That Martin Boehm shall travel twice through Pennsylvania, to the Susquehanna, to ascertain the state of the Church.

Jacob Baulus and Valentine Baulus were appointed to make visits from house to house through Middletown, Fredericktown, and so forth.



*Resolved*, That in case one of our superintendents—W. Otterbein and Martin Boehm—should die, another one in his place shall always be appointed. This is the wish of these two brethren, and the unanimous wish of all the preachers present.

Ludwig Duckwald and John Neidig received permission to administer all the ordinances of the house of God.

Bishop Otterbein closed this conference with an address and prayer. Newcomer, in his Journal, thus refers to the address: "He exhorted us particularly to be careful and preach no other doctrine than what is plainly laid down in the Bible; that nothing less than a new creature in Christ Jesus will be acceptable in the sight of God; that we should be ardently and diligently engaged in the work of the Lord; and, lastly, that we should love one another, and for Jesus' sake to suffer and endure all things. He then dismissed the conference with a powerful prayer."

Recurring again to the minutes, the reader will notice an apparently harsh judgment pronounced in the case of so efficient a man as J. G. Pfrimmer. The basis of this action was the kind of double attitude of Mr. Pfrimmer for a time with respect to the United Brethren and the Reformed Church, that from which he came. Like Bishop Otterbein himself, but probably with less wisdom in his deportment, he retained in a degree his attachment to the church of his fathers. From some cause not made quite clear, the United Brethren conference for a time withdrew its fellowship from him. At the session of 1805 this action was withdrawn, probably upon satisfactory explanation made by Mr. Pfrimmer, and he was restored to the full confidence and regard of his brethren and to his privileges as a minister in the Church.

It will also be noticed as a fact somewhat singular that the conference should have declined, by a three-fourths majority, to make any register of the names of the lay members of the Church. This attitude seems to indicate

a predominating Mennonite influence in the early Church, since the Reformed Church has always been careful to preserve the records not only of names, but of births and baptisms as well. This adverse feeling to such records seems to have been founded on the account of the sin of David in numbering Israel. In their extreme humility the Mennonite brethren were not willing to do anything that might wear the appearance of display. It was not, indeed, until many years after this that even an approach toward an accurate census of the Church was attempted.

It will also be observed that "permission" was given to administer the ordinances, while nothing is said of the ordination of ministers. Up to this time, and until some years later, the rite of ordination was not administered, though Mr. Otterbein himself had been regularly ordained in the Reformed Church in Germany. The ordinances therefore were administered, not by an unauthorized, but by an unordained ministry. In the early Methodist Church in America serious trouble had been for a time occasioned with respect to the administration of the ordinances, through the lack of a properly authorized ministry, until Mr. Wesley took it upon himself to ordain Dr. Coke, and send him to America to properly organize the church and ordain its ministers.<sup>1</sup> The reader will further notice that license to exhort was given by the annual conference, that function being then exercised by the higher body, though quarterly conferences are frequently referred to by Mr. Newcomer. A further study of the minutes will also suggest that the itinerant work was beginning to be reduced to more systematic form, thus beginning to displace the earlier method of each man forming a kind of circuit

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, by Nathan Bangs, D.D., Vol. II., pp. 154, 155.

most convenient to his own home, or going out to preach as inclination might lead.

### III. THE CONFERENCES OF 1803 AND 1804.

Of the Conference of 1803 Mr. Newcomer says: "October 4th—We arrived at David Snyder's, where the conference is to be held. Father Otterbein had arrived before us. 5th—This day the session of the conference commenced. The preachers present were all examined, and their character and usefulness particularly inquired into. Many tears were shed on the occasion. Brother Grosch preached at night. . . . I exhorted after him. 6th—This forenoon Father Otterbein gave us as usual a very powerful and interesting discourse. Father Boehm followed him. In the afternoon the session of the conference was continued. At night Brother Christian Berger addressed the congregation." This conference was closed on the 7th.

The Conference of 1804 was to be held at David Snyder's, but was adjourned, after a partial transaction of business, to the following spring, on account of a fatal fever very generally prevalent. Only five ministers were present, namely, Bishop Boehm, Schaffer, Mayer, Bortsfeld, and Newcomer. The session was opened in due form, and the letters sent to the conference were read. No more of the ministers arriving, an adjournment was made to the Wednesday preceding the Whitsuntide of 1805, the conference to be held at the house of Jacob Baulus, near Middletown, Maryland.

At this session the election of bishops should have occurred, but was postponed on account of the smallness of the number present. While there is no record of any action providing that the elections should occur quadrennially, it is sufficiently plain that such was the thought

of the preachers with regard to it. And since so much of what was done is left unrecorded in the minutes, as the election of bishops and the adoption of the name of the Church by the Conference of 1800, it is not improbable that action may have been taken on the subject of elections without finding its way into the record. Such action may, indeed, have been taken when the first election was made.

#### IV. THE CONFERENCE OF 1805.

The Conference of 1805 possesses interest chiefly on account of the second election of bishops for the Church. It was held, as provided for by the previous adjournment, at the house of Jacob Baulus, commencing on May 29. Mr. Newcomer, in his *Journal*, has this minute: "29th—To-day our annual conference commenced at Brother Jacob Baulus's. Twenty-one preachers were present. Father Otterbein and Martin Boehm were elected presidents."<sup>1</sup>

The ministers present at this conference were: W. Otterbein, Martin Boehm, John Hershey, George A. Gue-thing, Daniel Strickler, Frederick Schaffer, Peter Kemp, L. Everhart, David Snyder, Christian Crum, Frederick Duckwald, William Ambrose, Jacob Baulus, Jacob Geisinger, Christian Berger, Abraham Mayer, Christian Newcomer, and George Benedum. The list contains eighteen names, lacking three of the number as stated by Mr. Newcomer.

The following are the complete minutes of this conference :

Conference was opened by prayer and an exhortation by Brother Otterbein.

The preachers resolved to engage in the work of the Lord with more earnestness than ever before, by the assisting grace of God. O Lord, help thou us, thy poor and unworthy servants, for thine own sake. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Newcomer's *Journal*, p. 134.



The preachers were duly examined in regard to their moral and ministerial character.

Brother Pfrimmer again received permission to preach the gospel among us.

The following brethren arrived at the close of the session to-day : Ludwig Duckwald, Daniel Troyer, and Jacob Dehoff.

Conference met May 30, at 8 A.M., and was opened by the reading of a chapter and prayer.

Brother Newcomer agreed to travel the following year through Maryland and a certain part of Pennsylvania, and Christian Crum agreed to travel through Virginia. Resolved that each shall receive forty *livres* [less than eight dollars] for his labors per annum.

*Resolved*, That George A. Guething shall be present at the appointed great meetings [*grosse Versammlungen*] in Maryland, and on this side of the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania.

It was recommended that Brother Guething should not reside in Hagerstown, and that Hagerstown should be regularly visited by our preachers.

*Resolved*, That the preachers that preach only where they like shall receive no compensation for their services, and that it shall be their duty to pay over to the conference the money that they may receive, for the benefit of the traveling preachers.

Permission was granted by this conference to Brother Frederick Duckwald, from Sleepy Creek, and Brother Christian Berger, from Westmoreland, to baptize, administer the sacrament, and solemnize marriages.

*Resolved*, That the next session of this conference shall be held at the house of Lorenz Everhart, on Tuesday before Whitsunday, 1806, and that a great meeting shall be held there, commencing the Saturday following.

The session of conference came to a close with the reading of a chapter and an appropriate exhortation.

W. OTTERBEIN.

MARTIN BOEHM.<sup>1</sup>

The minutes, it will be observed, are again silent as to the election of the bishops. On this point, however, the note in Newcomer's Journal leaves no doubt. His words, "Father Otterbein and Martin Boehm were elected presidents,"<sup>2</sup> have already been quoted. This election would

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, pp. 283-285.

<sup>2</sup> Newcomer here uses the term "president" in preference to *superintendent*, or *bishop*. He uses the same word in reference to himself in 1813 and 1814.



doubtless have occurred in 1894 had the conference been regularly held.

This conference became a memorable one to the brethren of that time as the last which their great and good leader, Bishop Otterbein, ever attended.<sup>1</sup> Henceforth his words to the conference must be conveyed by correspondence. He was yet to live for a number of years, but the infirmities of age began to tell on him to such extent that he could no longer undertake the necessary travel, or venture for a series of days from his home. While, therefore, his gracious spirit was still with the preachers in their conferences, his benign face and stately presence were not hereafter to be seen among them. He was now in the seventy-ninth year of his age. By his side in this session sat that other venerable leader, the devout and always benignant Boehm, a little the senior of Otterbein, now in his eightieth year, but retaining a larger share of vigor in his advanced years. It was an interesting spectacle to behold these eminent leaders, ripe alike in years, wisdom, and grace, abundant in labors and the rich fruits of the gospel, presiding with fatherly affection over the devoted company of followers who had gathered about them. Forty years had passed since they first met, at the meeting in Isaac Long's barn, and recognized in each other chosen vessels of God for bearing to men the gospel of living spiritual experience. During every year since, they had met, either in the great meetings, or in conference sessions, to take counsel together over the great work in which the Lord had enlisted their hearts. Their counsels throughout had been characterized by a beautiful harmony. Mutual concessions as to modes of worship and practice had been made in a brotherly spirit, and no ripple of discord had through this long period disturbed the perfect

<sup>1</sup>See Spayth's *History*, p. 105.

harmony of their relations. And now at this last conference at which both were present, their personal example of unselfish Christian fellowship made a strong appeal to their followers to preserve the same spirit which was so beautifully expressed in the name which they adopted—United Brethren in Christ.

#### V. THE CONFERENCES OF 1806-1810.

A more rapid reference to several succeeding conferences must be sufficient. The session of 1806, commencing May 21 and closing on the 24th, was held at Everhart's, in Frederick County, Maryland. At this conference the question was asked, "Are all the preachers united in love?" The answer is a notable one: "We are not only united among ourselves, but we also love all our fellow-men, whoever they may be." The name of Joseph Hoffman, one of the three later ordained by Bishop Otterbein, and afterwards Bishop Hoffman, appears for the first time in the minutes of this session. Plans of work for the year were arranged, including a number of great meetings.

The Conference of 1807 met at Christian Herr's, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Bishop Martin Boehm again presiding. A short and harmonious session was held. Plans for work were again arranged, and Isaac Niswander and Abraham Mayer were authorized to administer the ordinances.

The Conference of 1808 was held at Abraham Niswander's, in Virginia, commencing on May 25. After the usual examination of the moral and official character of the preachers, the conference considered the method of advancing men to the ministry. Reference has already been made to the annual conference's granting license to exhort. This preliminary was now referred to the ministers assembled at great meetings. The resolution

which was adopted contains the germ of all the later practice of the Church on this subject :

*Resolved*, That those who desire to receive license to preach among us shall be examined at a great meeting ; and, if favorably reported, two of the elders shall grant them license for one year, at the end of which time they shall appear at the conference for examination. In case they cannot appear at the conference, their license may be renewed at a great meeting.

At this conference the name of George Hoffman appears for the first time. Some of the names of ministers are missed for successive sessions from the list of those present at the conferences. This was frequently occasioned by the long distances to be traveled over, as in the case of Christian Berger, who, with others, was laying the foundations of the Church west of the Alleghanies, in Westmoreland and adjoining counties, and across the State line in Ohio.

The Conference of 1809 was again held at Christian Herr's, commencing on May 10. Bishop Boehm presided. Newcomer, Guething, and Joseph Hoffman were among those present. The subject of a closer coöperation with the English brethren, that is, the Methodists, received much attention at this session.

The Conference of 1810 was held in Frederick County, Maryland, at the house of John Cronise, commencing on June 6. Sixteen preachers were in attendance. Letters from Bishop Otterbein and others were read. The subject of a closer union with the Methodist Church was again considered, the question coming up in a memorial on the subject sent by Bishop Otterbein's church in Baltimore. A letter was also received from the Methodist conference relating to the same subject, and was answered in a fraternal spirit. The more careful supervision of the general work received attention, and provision was made

requiring the older preachers to visit all the appointments on the different charges twice during the year if possible. In this supervision of the work by the more experienced preachers we have the foreshadowing of the regular presiding-eldership which was later provided for. The itinerant system was in a formative state. But few of the preachers were as yet unreserved itinerants. Nearly all were engaged in other occupations, but devoted much time to the preaching of the gospel, generally in the regions nearest their homes, but often making long journeys to encourage the work already established, or to push forward the outposts into territory not yet occupied.

#### VI. ORGANIZATION OF MIAMI ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The year 1810 was especially emphasized in the progressive history of the Church by the organization of a second conference. The tide of emigration had been carrying large numbers of people westward into the new State of Ohio, which, in 1802, had been admitted into the Union. Among these were a number of United Brethren families, and soon United Brethren ministers appeared among them to look after the spiritual interests of the scattered sheep, and to gather others into the fold. The settlements of these families were mostly in the middle, southern, and southwestern parts of the State, the latter in the Miami Valley, at Germantown and other points near Dayton. The distance was too great for these ministers to attend the conference in the East, and the Miami Conference was accordingly organized. More will be said of this in an appropriate place farther on.

#### VII. THE EASTERN CONFERENCE—SESSIONS OF 1811-1814.

The Eastern Conference of 1811 met on May 23, in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, with twenty ministers



in attendance. Letters from a number of absent ministers were read. The question of compensation received attention at this session, the salary for an unmarried man being fixed at eighty dollars a year.

At the session of 1812, convened at Antietam on May 13, there were twenty-two ministers present. The list of these is as follows: Christian Newcomer, Christian Crum, George A. Guething, Abraham Draksel, Abraham Mayer, Joseph Hoffman, Christian Smith, Isaac Niswander, David Snyder, Valentine Baulus, Jacob Baulus, Abraham Hershey, Lorenz Everhart, Michael Thomas, Jacob Weidner, Christian Berger, Henry Hiestand, Henry G. Spayth, George Guething, Martin Crider, John Crider, and Jacob Dehoff. The names of the venerable leaders, Bishops Otterbein and Boehm, have now disappeared finally from the list of those in attendance, and Guething is present for the last time. Boehm has been transferred to the church triumphant, and Otterbein, feeble in body from great age, is waiting for the call of the Master. The burden of responsibility is being shifted to other shoulders, which the Lord has been preparing to receive it.

Appended to the minutes of this session of the conference is a complete list of the ministers in the denomination who were authorized to administer the ordinances. It will be remembered that these men, excepting Otterbein himself, were unordained, the Bishop, as heretofore stated, not ordaining any of his followers until in his closing days. Those so authorized were twenty-six in number, as follows: William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, George A. Guething, Christian Newcomer, Christian Crum, John Hershey, Christopher Grosch, Abraham Draksel, Ludwig Duckwald, John Neidig, David Long, Abraham Hershey, Christian Hershey, Abraham Mayer, William Ambrose, Isaac Niswander, Daniel Troyer, George Benedum, Peter



Kemp, Adam Riegel, Frederick Schaffer, Joseph Hoffman, David Gingerich, Christian Berger, David Snyder, and Christian Smith. Although the name of Bishop Boehm appears in the list, his death had occurred in March previous to the sitting of this conference.

It was not an unusual thing for a conference secretary in those earlier days to begin his record with a fervent invocation, or to close with a similar earnest prayer, thus indicating the devout spirit which prevailed among the brethren in their annual assembling. In the present instance the secretary closes his minutes, written out at considerable length, with these words: "O Lord God Almighty, bless thy work; grant thy Holy Spirit to all thy servants who preach thy truth; fill them with pure love, with zeal and wisdom; may they walk uprightly before thee, and honor thee in all their ways."

The session of 1813 was held at the house of Christian Herr, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. There being no bishop present, Christopher Grosch was chosen chairman. Eighteen ministers were present, and four received license to exhort. An address from the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, signed by Bishop Asbury, was received with much satisfaction, and it was ordered that Newcomer and Baulus convey a similar address to the next session of that conference, "in order to more and more effect a union between the two churches." By the union thus proposed was meant close friendly coöperation, rather than organic consolidation. A committee consisting of Newcomer, Christian Crum, Joseph Hoffman, and J. Baulus, was appointed to confer with a similar committee from the Albright Church (Evangelical Association), concerning a plan of union between the two churches. This proposition meant more than simply friendly coöperation. Both churches using at that time

only the German language, and doctrine and general polity being so nearly identical, it was thought by many that an organic union might be effected to mutual advantage.

Bishop Boehm having died, Christian Newcomer was elected bishop for one year. This was the last session of the conference at which the beloved Guething was present, his death occurring in June, only a few weeks after the adjournment.

The conference convened in 1814 on May 24, at Hagerstown, Maryland. Twenty-one ministers were in attendance. The names of the absent ones do not appear in the minutes, but, owing to the long distances which they had to travel, portions of the three States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia being included, it is probable that at least as many were absent as present, so that the number of preachers now may have been above forty. Six new names were here added to the list, among them that of Henry Kumler, Sen. Letters were read from Abraham Draksel and Christian Berger, both of whom were at that time laboring in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. A fraternal letter from the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was also read. The letter expressed gratification with the amicable relations existing between the Methodist and United Brethren churches, and a desire for their continuance.

The Otterbein Church in Baltimore having been temporarily supplied by Mr. Schaffer since the death of Bishop Otterbein, the congregation sent a request that the conference appoint for them a minister. As this congregation from its first organization held an independent position, its relation to the conference, while it was in thorough harmony with the United Brethren movement, was somewhat different from that of other congregations. A committee consisting of Neidig, Snyder, Baulus, and New-

comer, was appointed to consider the request and make all proper arrangements. The committee appointed Joseph Hoffman, later Bishop Hoffman, for one year, with the understanding that if acceptable he might serve the congregation longer, but not beyond a period of three years. The arrangement proved agreeable to the church, and at the end of three years another minister was sent. Following the agreement thus made, the pulpit of the church has been since supplied by the United Brethren conferences.

There are no indications that any changes in the Confession of Faith were adopted by the Conference of 1814, the Confession ordered printed in 1813, which seems to have been that of 1789, being approved. But there is reason to believe that the Rules of Discipline were in some points changed. Christian Newcomer was reelected bishop for a period of three years, his election in 1813 having been for one year.

The conference session seems to have been a harmonious one, and the secretary, Jacob Baulus, closes his minutes with the fervent prayer: "Lord Jesus, be with thy servants. Mold them after thine own image. Give them godly zeal and untiring faithfulness. Let thy virtues shine in them, and thy light shine through them. And may many be brought to light, and we will ascribe all the praise to God. Amen."

#### VIII. THE MIAMI CONFERENCE—SESSIONS OF 1810-1814.

Mention has already been made of the organization of a new conference in the West, the second of the Church in the historic order. The initial session was held on August 13, 1810, at a camp-meeting held at Michael Crider's, in Ross County, Ohio. That there was now a considerable number of United Brethren west of the Alleghany Mountains, is suggested by the fact that at

this meeting there were present thirteen preachers and two exhorters. Among these was Christian Newcomer, not yet then elected to the office of bishop, but making a tour of supervision to the scattered churches of what was then called the West. Bishops Otterbein and Boehm being now very old and unable to attend to episcopal duties, especially in so distant a field, the care of the superintendency was gradually laid upon others, and chiefly upon Mr. Newcomer.

At this first session of the conference but little business was transacted beyond simple organization. The session was opened, however, in the usual regular form, with the reading of the third chapter of I. John, singing, and prayer. Then followed a very fervent experience meeting, in which all the ministers participated. In this meeting all covenanted together to assist one another in promoting the common work.

The preachers present at this conference were : Christian Newcomer, George Benedum, John Froshauer, Daniel Troyer, Andrew Zeller, Jacob Zeller, Henry Evinger, Christian Crum, Abraham Hiestand, Michael Crider, Thomas Winters, Ludwig Kramer, Henry Hiestand ; the exhorters, Frederick Klinger and John Pontius.

The second session of the Miami Conference, that of 1811, was held on August 23 in Fairfield County, Ohio. Thirteen preachers were present at this conference. After the opening exercises, Mr. Newcomer, who again presided, preached an appropriate sermon. Then followed the experience meeting usual at all the conferences of those times. On the second day the examination of the moral and official character of the ministers was held. Ludwig Kramer and Jacob Zeller offered themselves as unreserved itinerants, and the conference accepted them. John Pontius, John Bowser, Dewalt Mechlin, and Jacob Lehman



were licensed to preach. George Benedum was elected presiding elder. The conference was closed with a fervent address by Mr. Newcomer. Such are a few of the points in the transactions of these early conference sessions.

The sessions of 1812, 1813, and 1814 were each held in due form, the first at Andrew Zeller's in Montgomery County, on August 6; the second at the house of Peter Seitz, in Fairfield County, on August 26; and the third again at Andrew Zeller's, on August 23. Bishop Newcomer presided at each of these conferences—at the sessions of 1813 and 1814 as a fully authorized bishop.

At the session of 1813 an important question relating to the proper mode of ordaining ministers was considered. Regret was expressed that too little order had been observed both in receiving and ordaining preachers. A resolution was adopted requesting Father Otterbein to ordain one or more preachers.

At the session of 1814 important steps were taken preparatory to holding a General Conference. The conference arranged the plan of representation which was afterward carried out.



## CHAPTER XI

### FRIENDLY CORRESPONDENCE

#### I. WITH THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

WE have already seen that between Bishop Otterbein, the founder of the United Brethren Church, and Bishop Asbury, the first great leader of the American Methodist movement, there existed permanently the strongest bonds of fraternal and Christian fellowship. This feeling of brotherly regard was widespread among their followers as well. In those earlier years the preachers of the United Brethren Church preached almost exclusively in the German language, while the Methodist preachers used, with the rarest exceptions, only the English. There was therefore but slight occasion for clashing, or for the springing up of jealousies, although they occupied the same field. The preaching places of the two churches were open for the freest use by the ministers of each, and revival meetings were frequently held by United Brethren and Methodist ministers together. Of the converts, those speaking only the German language were usually gathered into the United Brethren fold, while those who spoke the English only almost uniformly united with the Methodist Church. Visits were frequently made by the ministers of one church to the annual conference sessions of the other, and there was a general feeling that the work they were doing was one work for a common Master.

This generous feeling and practice, which had become an unwritten law between the two churches, led to a

friendly official correspondence, commencing in 1809, and extending through several years. The correspondence was conducted in part by letters, and in part by regularly appointed delegates, the object being to cement still more closely in the bonds of Christian fellowship the two denominations. The leading men of the Methodist Church, with Bishop Asbury, were strongly committed to this fraternal attitude, as were also those of the United Brethren Church. Among the latter none were more deeply enlisted in the cause of this Christian union than Bishop Newcomer, both before and after his election to the office of superintendent, and no other was perhaps quite so deeply disappointed as he when, after the death of Bishop Asbury, in 1816, some in high official position among the Methodist brethren began to withdraw from the friendly compact which had been entered into.

As Mr. Spayth was at this time a member of the United Brethren conference, it will be quite in place to repeat here his own record of this section of early history. He says :

“In the year 1809 commenced a friendly correspondence between the Methodist Episcopal Church and our Church. For this purpose Brother Christian Newcomer attended the annual conference for the Baltimore District, which was held in Harrisonburg, Virginia. That conference appointed a committee of five elders to confer with Brother Newcomer on a plan of union. That committee made a favorable report, and the conference resolved to send a friendly letter by Brother Newcomer, to be delivered to Father Otterbein ; also resolved to send a messenger to lay their report before our next annual conference, which was done. Upon the reception of this report, a letter of amity and reciprocal friendship was sent from the Brethren conference, through their messenger, to the annual

conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church which met in Baltimore in 1810. This conference resolved to continue the friendly correspondence and settle on a plan of harmonizing in some respects with the United Brethren in Christ.

“This treaty, if we may so call it, of amity and friendship rested on the conviction founded in Scripture and Christian experience that a Christian people who had all the essential and important elements of our holy religion, in doctrine, in faith, experience, and practice, in connection with a living and itinerant ministry among them, and who occupied the relations of co-workers, . . . should have some bond of union, some fraternal relations, more than had hitherto been exhibited and cherished by the great family of Protestant churches, and in the observance of which they might find a cause to vie with each other in those delightful acts of brotherly kindness, and in the interchanges in public worship, as well as in the social and more endearing enjoyments of prayer-, class-, and love-feast-meetings.

“February 24, 1812, Brother Newcomer met Bishop Asbury in Leesburg, Virginia. There the Bishop invited Brother Newcomer to attend the Philadelphia Conference in April, in order to assist in effecting a link of union and brotherly fellowship within the bounds of that conference. Brother Newcomer attended accordingly; and the conference appointed Thomas Ware, Bouring, and Fox to confer with him. The conference also resolved that they would act and go as far in this matter as the Baltimore Conference had done, and to signify the same they addressed a letter to the conference of the United Brethren, with a second resolve to send two messengers to consult more fully on this subject with our annual conference.

“The points in this agreement were but few, leaving

each church entire and distinct, as they had been previous to this arrangement. The first was, that the meeting-houses on each side should be open, when not occupied by themselves; secondly, that the members in and from each church should be admitted into the class-meetings, prayer-meetings, and love-feast meetings at all times when they should present themselves for admission."<sup>1</sup>

In earlier pages of his history Mr. Spayth refers to the advent of Mr. Asbury, then still an unordained lay preacher, and his brethren, the Methodist preachers, to the regions occupied by the United Brethren, and to the strong fraternal feeling which sprang up between the ministers and people of the two churches. His record of this gives an interesting picture of the conditions which prevailed. A part of his account is thus condensed:

About the time of the War of the Revolution there were numerous societies of Brethren in the German settlements of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. In most, if not in all, those places, the Brethren preachers preceded by some years the advent of the Methodist preachers. When the latter pushed their way into the German towns and neighborhoods, the Brethren received them gladly into their houses, affording them every opportunity to preach the gospel in the English language; for, while many of them could not understand the tongue they spoke, they could understand the language of the heart, and they perceived that they preached a living gospel, a heart-felt religion, the same as their own, and that God was with them. And when souls were converted under their ministry they rejoiced greatly, and called them their brethren in the Lord. And these English ministers, called Methodists, found in the United Brethren the same spirit of grace, and of truth and love. Hence they were to-

<sup>1</sup>Spayth's *History*, pp. 113-115.



gether in mutual friendship and confidence, a friendship which, through their united labors, resulted in much spiritual advantage, in many seasons of gracious refreshing through the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of the people, and the conversion of many souls. Wesley's rules, as far as they came in conflict with or would for a moment have interrupted or marred this perfect joy, were either suspended or held subject to the higher law of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

These fraternal relations continued for a series of years, until after the death of Bishop Asbury, as already observed, every door to every form of service inviting the admission of English and German, Methodist and United Brethren, alike. Mr. Spayth was for some years a participant in the experiences of this brotherly fellowship, and as he wrote many years afterward, when well advanced in age, his heart still dwelt fondly upon the gracious scenes. With tender pathos we hear him saying :

"I confess it is hard for me to get away from this sunny spot. The love, I trust, still burns within my breast. I can look back and yet see the smiles and cordial shakes of the hand,—hands now cold in death, while mine writes and trembles,—the hearty and joyous welcome when Methodists and United Brethren met. Their songs, their voices, their shouts of Hallelujah, Hallelujah, continue to ring—ring and vibrate in my nervous system while I write, and thrill my soul afresh. Whenever the mind dwells on the loveliness of those past scenes, an angel seems to whisper, It was then that

"'The morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy.'

"We are constrained to say :

<sup>1</sup>Spayth's *History*, pp. 79-81.



“‘What happy hours we once enjoyed,  
How sweet their memory still.’

“‘Then there was no iniquity in Jacob,  
Nor perverseness in Israel ;  
The Lord his God was with him,  
And the shout of a King was among them.’”<sup>1</sup>

In the years 1809 to 1814 a series of official letters, now possessing a peculiar historic interest, passed between the Methodist and United Brethren conferences. The correspondence is well worth preserving, and may be found in Spayth's and Lawrence's histories.

It was a cause for profound regret to the United Brethren, and equally so to many Methodists, that the fraternal compact thus formed was destined so soon to be broken after the death of the great-souled Asbury. An influential presiding elder in the Methodist Church, Mr. Spayth relates, more zealous for the observance of Mr. Wesley's rule than for the cultivation of mutual Christian love between different denominations, declared that he would no longer recognize the terms of the union. The preachers under his control submitted to his ruling, and the doors of the Methodist class-meeting were closed against United Brethren. Happily, these conditions have long since passed. Mr. Wesley's arbitrary rule, doubtless a wise and good measure when his early followers in England were subject to disturbance by mobs of outlaws, long ago became a dead letter in the Methodist Discipline and has disappeared from its pages.

## II. WITH THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.

With the opening years of the present century the church known as the Evangelical Association, at first as the Albrights, or Albright's People (*die Albrecht's Leute*), came into being. Mr. Albright, the founder, born and

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, pp. 81, 82.

baptized in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, connected himself, upon his conversion, with the Methodist Church. He had little knowledge of the English language, and his early ministry was directed wholly to the German-speaking people of eastern Pennsylvania. If Bishop Asbury had been disposed to favor a German ministry within the Methodist Episcopal Church, it is probable that this separate body of German Methodists would not have been formed. The original conference, in adopting a name, at its session of 1807, called itself "The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference."<sup>1</sup> This was later, when it was entirely clear that the organization must be an independent one, exchanged for the name "The Evangelical Association."

The type of this new body of Christians, their doctrinal teachings and polity, their insistence upon conversion and a godly life, the spiritual fervor which characterized their preaching, their prayer- and class-meetings, and withal their itinerant method of bringing the gospel to the people, naturally attracted the favorable attention of the United Brethren. The further fact of coincidence in language, their preaching being then wholly in the German, seemed to make not only fraternal coöperation, but actual organic union, with them desirable. It was with this thought in mind that Bishop Newcomer, in April, 1813, made a visit to their conference, where the subject of union was freely discussed. As a result, they prepared

<sup>1</sup> Dr. R. Yeakel, in his *History of the Evangelical Association*, pp. 84, 85, says: "This conference gave the church it represented no distinct name. . . . But the conference adopted a conference name by calling itself 'The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference.' Albright had been a Methodist, and was such still in his heart, faith, and practice. If he had been allowed to fulfill his mission to the Germans within the Methodist Church, he would have remained in that church, and the Evangelical Association would probably never have come into an existence. Yet he was Methodistically minded all his lifetime, and so were all his co-laborers, and hence came this designation of the conference quite naturally."

a written communication on the subject of union, which they handed to Bishop Newcomer, to be presented by him to the United Brethren conference, which was to meet soon after in Lancaster County. The United Brethren received the communication favorably, and appointed a committee of four brethren to meet a like committee of four, the Albright conference to arrange, if possible, a basis of union. The men appointed on the part of the United Brethren were Bishop Newcomer, Christian Crum, Joseph Hoffman, and Jacob Baulus. On the part of the Albrights they were George Miller, John Walter, John Dresbach, and Henry Neible. They met in council on November 11, 1813, and remained together for several days, but the object of the meeting failed.<sup>1</sup>

Further friendly interchanges followed in the next few years, and a final council was held at the house of Henry Kumler, afterward the elder Bishop Kumler, commencing on February 14, 1817. Bishop Newcomer has this brief entry in his Journal: "February 14—Twelve preachers, six of the United Brethren in Christ, and six of the Albright brethren, met this day at Henry Kumler's, to make another attempt to unite the two societies, but we could not succeed in coming to an agreement."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Yeakel, in his "History of the Evangelical Association," gives the names of the United Brethren members of this commission as "Bishop C. Newcomer, Joseph Hoffman, Jacob Baulus, Abraham Mayer, Christian Berger, and Conrad Roth."<sup>3</sup> The names of the Albright commissioners are not given. Bishop Albright's name does not appear in connection with this movement, his death having occurred in 1808.

The cause of this second failure is attributed by Dr. Yeakel to two considerations: First, the commissioners

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, pp. 142, 143.

<sup>2</sup> Newcomer's *Journal*, p. 247.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. R. Yeakel's *History of the Evangelical Association*, Vol. II., p. 142.

from the United Brethren side were not empowered with full authority to make a final arrangement. Whatever agreement they might enter into must, according to their instructions, be referred to their General Conference for approval. Second, in the judgment of the Evangelical commissioners the United Brethren were not yet sufficiently crystallized into denominational life. The two points alleged to sustain this view were, that they had as yet no printed Discipline, and that their itinerant system was not yet organized, and was therefore without strength.

On these points it may be remarked, first, that the genius of the United Brethren Church has from its early days, or since the organization of its General Conference, required the approval by that body of any important movement affecting the body of the Church generally. The General Conference would not now empower half a dozen men to enter into any compact that should affect the autonomy of the Church. In regard to the second point, it may be said that the Discipline of the Church adopted by the General Conference of 1815 was printed in 1816, the year previous to the meeting of the joint committee in February, 1817.<sup>1</sup> On the last point, that pertaining to the itinerancy, it is to be said that the United Brethren itinerancy was at that time not yet fully organized, as has been before remarked in this volume. Mr. Albright, having united with the Methodist Church, and for a time expecting to remain permanently so identified, adopted all the polity of that church, a part of which is its thoroughly organized itinerant system. The early United Brethren came mostly from churches whose polity was essentially congregational and non-itinerant, and its itinerant service for a time was chiefly that of evangelistic visitation, the true itinerant feeling and system being not yet developed.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 166.

The local ministry remains with us to this day, entitled to equal rights and privileges in the annual conference with the itinerant ministry, and carefully protected by constitutional provision,<sup>1</sup> a kind of historic heirloom of the time when the entire ministry of the Church was essentially local. Bishops Otterbein and Boehm never were itinerants except in the sense of evangelists. Bishop Newcomer became an itinerant in the extremest sense, if almost incessant travel constitutes one an itinerant.

<sup>1</sup>See p. 366; also, *Discipline*, Chap. III., Constitution, Art. II., Sec. 3.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE DEPARTURE OF THE LEADERS

WITHIN a period of less than twenty-four months, in the years 1812 and 1813, the Church was called to sustain the loss of the three most eminent of its leaders of those early days.

#### I. BISHOP MARTIN BOEHM.

The first of these to be called to the final reward was Bishop Martin Boehm. His death occurred on March 23, 1812. Though so greatly advanced in years, his health and strength were preserved to a remarkable degree. He was quite active, and able to ride on horseback until within a few days of death. His illness was very brief, and when the messenger came this servant of the Lord was ready. He suffered but slight pain during the few days of his last illness, and it was not supposed that the end was near. The only sign of a possible fatal result was a rapid decline in his strength. Realizing, seemingly, that the last hour was at hand, he requested to be raised up, that he might sing and pray once more. He did this in a clear and distinct voice, then sank back on his pillow, and his sainted spirit took its flight. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery beside the church, on his son's farm, earlier a portion of his own homestead, to await the trumpet call of the final day. His age was eighty-six years, three months, and eleven days, and he served in the gospel ministry fifty-three years.

Before passing from the name of Bishop Boehm a word

should be said concerning the relations he sustained to the Methodist Episcopal Church during the closing years of his life. His son, Rev. Henry Boehm, in his "Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical," written in his eighty-first year, makes a strong claim as to the connection of Mr. Boehm with that church, and conveys the impression that his relations to the United Brethren Church were in his later years rather lightly held. This much is to be said truthfully of Mr. Boehm, that, like Otterbein and Wesley, he did not deem it an impossibility, nor even in any sense inconsistent, to hold relationship in more than a single denomination. Mr. Wesley, while originating the movement which has exerted so mighty an influence in the progress of modern Christianity, never thought it necessary to separate himself formally from the Church of England, nor was he ever excluded from its fellowship. Mr. Otterbein, in like manner, though seldom in his later life attending the sessions of the synod, never severed his relation to the German Reformed Church, nor was his name ever stricken from the roll of its ministers. So Bishop Boehm, when quite far advanced in age, about the year 1802, for the convenience of attending the social meetings held in Boehm's Chapel, permitted his name to be placed on the class-book of the Methodist society. This church, a substantial stone building, stood on land that had belonged to his son Jacob, the farm being earlier a part of Martin Boehm's own homestead. Quite early, before the church was built, Mr. Boehm had welcomed Methodist ministers to his home to preach the word in his house, and a class of converts was formed, Mrs. Boehm being one of the number. His son Jacob also became a member of that church, while Henry, at first recognized as among the United Brethren ministers, was afterward attracted to the Methodist Church

on account of the greater thoroughness of its organization, especially as to its more elaborate discipline and the efficiency of its itinerant system.

As to the permanent connection of Martin Boehm with the United Brethren Church, it should be sufficient to say that he continued to attend the sessions of the annual conference, presiding over it as bishop, even after Bishop Otterbein was no longer able to be present. Both Otterbein and Boehm were present at the Conference of 1800, at which time they were first formally elected bishops. Of this Henry Boehm makes note. In 1801 both were present, their names being signed to the minutes. The name of George A. Guething, who was for a number of years secretary of the conference, appears in connection with theirs. Of the three, Boehm's name stands first. The minutes of the Conference of 1802 are signed by Boehm and Otterbein, Boehm's name again standing first. This reversal of the names is quite in harmony with Bishop Otterbein's modesty and his uniform recognition of the apostolic injunction, "In honor preferring one another." The minutes of 1803 are signed by William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, and George Adam Guething. In 1804 Boehm was present, Otterbein absent. This was the year of the fever epidemic, but Boehm was in attendance. In 1805 both were present, and the minutes are signed by William Otterbein and Martin Boehm. At this session both were reelected bishops. In 1806 neither Otterbein nor Boehm was present, both being now past eighty years of age. The minutes are signed by George Adam Guething and Christian Newcomer. In 1807 Boehm was again present, and the minutes are signed by Martin Boehm and George Adam Guething. The minutes of 1808 are signed by Guething and Newcomer. In 1809 Boehm was again present. This session was held in Lancaster County. The

minutes are not signed, but his presence is noted in the body of the record. This was the last session Bishop Boehm attended. He was now eighty-three years old, and the time was three years before his death. In the minutes of 1812, the session opening on May 13, Bishop Boehm having died in March previous, his death is duly recorded.

It is not necessary to follow Henry Boehm's statement in all its details, in portions of which he seems to wax perhaps a little over-zealous. But he insists strongly upon his father's high sense of honor—that he could not stoop to do a mean thing. But would it not seem quite inconsistent for Mr. Boehm to continue up to almost the last year of his life to preside as bishop over the United Brethren conference, or to suffer his formal reëlection in 1805, if he had become really a Methodist? We must conclude that he did precisely what he says he did, in answer to one of a series of questions first published in the *Methodist Magazine*;<sup>1</sup> also found in Dr. Bangs's "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church."<sup>2</sup> The portion of the answer referred to is as follows: "Age having overtaken me, with some of its accompanying infirmities, I could not travel as I had formerly done. In 1802 I enrolled my name on a Methodist class-book, and I have found great comfort in meeting with my brethren." It was at the age of seventy-seven when Mr. Boehm entered, for the sake of convenience, into this relation with his Methodist brethren, so that he might have an open door to the class-meetings, which at that time would have been closed against him. From 1809 on, for some years, he could have enjoyed this freedom without enrolling his name. In the same answer he says: "I am, this 12th of April, 1811, in my eighty-sixth year. Through the boundless goodness of God I am still able to visit the sick, and occasionally to preach in the neighbor-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. VI., pp. 210-249.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II., pp. 365-376.



hood. To his name be all the glory in Christ Jesus." "I can truly say my last days are my best days. My beloved Eve is traveling with me the same road, Zionward ; my children, and most of my grandchildren, are made partakers of the same grace."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the name of Bishop Boehm, while associated in a fraternal and eminently Christian way with another denomination for which he cherished only regard and love, stands inseparably connected with the Church to which he gave the service of his long and useful life, second only in honor and veneration to that of the greater Otterbein, with whom in the labors of the gospel he was so closely associated.<sup>2</sup>

## II. GEORGE ADAM GUETHING.

The session of the Eastern Conference for 1812 was held at Antietam, Mr. Guething's home, commencing on May 12. Bishop Boehm having died, and Bishop Otterbein being too feeble to attend, Mr. Guething was called to preside. Though well advanced in life, he was in seemingly good health and in a remarkably cheerful mood, and none had any thought that the end was nigh. According to Mr. Spayth, the circumstances of his death were as follows :

Mr. Guething, accompanied by his wife, went to the city of Baltimore, to spend a week or two with his dearly beloved brother William Otterbein and other friends in that city. But becoming somewhat indisposed, he shortened his visit, and left the city for home. On the way returning,

<sup>1</sup> Boehm's *Reminiscences*, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> The reader, whose attention has been especially drawn to the regular order of the annual conferences from 1800 to 1809, will be further interested to notice the succession of the Eastern Conference onward to the General Conference of 1815. The minutes of 1810 and 1811 are without signature, though Guething and Newcomer were present at each. Those of 1812 (May 12) are signed by Newcomer. Guething was present, his death occurring in June following. At the conference of 1813, Boehm having died, Newcomer was first elected bishop. He was reelected in 1814. The minutes of the sessions of 1814 and 1815 are signed by Christian Newcomer, Bishop, and Jacob Baulus, Secretary.



he stopped for the night at the home of Mr. Snyder, about thirty miles from the city. Here his illness increased during the night. Early in the morning he felt somewhat relieved for a while, and conversed with his wife and Mrs. Snyder about the Christian's hope and the prospect of a glorious immortality. Suddenly he became silent. When he spoke again he said, "I feel as though my end had come." Presently he spoke again, exclaiming: "Hark, hark, who spoke? Whose voice is this I hear? Light! light! what golden light! Now all is dark again. Please help me out of this bed." He was assisted, as requested, and then said, "Now let us sing," and led in the following stanza:

"Komm', du lang verlangte Stunde,  
Komm', du Lebensgeist von oben;  
O wie soll mein froher Munde,  
Jesu, deine Treue loben;  
Wann mich deine Liebesmacht,  
Dir zu deinen frei gemacht."

A somewhat free translation of this beautiful stanza is as follows:

"Come, thou long-expected moment,  
Come, thou Spirit from on high;  
'Tis thy call, my Lord and Master;  
How shall I express my joy,  
When thy grace and power of love  
Bid me rise to climes above."

Having completed the singing of this stanza, Mr. Guething sank down on his knees, leaning against the bed, and offered an earnest prayer of thanksgiving to God for his great mercy toward him, and for the Father's blessing in this supreme hour. He was then assisted into bed again, and in about a quarter of an hour his devout spirit was caught up to God. Mr. Guething's death occurred on June 28, 1812. His age was seventy-one years, four months, and twenty-two days. Mr. Guething was a man

of brilliant powers as a pulpit orator, and was deemed the Apollos among the early leaders of the Church.

### III. BISHOP PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN.

The time for the departure of the greatest of this illustrious trio drew on more gradually. For him the summons came last, so that in another sense the words of Scripture were fulfilled, "The first shall be last." For some years before the end came, Bishop Otterbein's strength began to yield, and once it was thought his death was at hand. In May, 1805, he presided over the conference for the last time. It was at this session, held at the house of Jacob Baulus, that he and Bishop Boehm were elected the second time to the office of superintendent. In December of that year he was taken suddenly and so severely ill that his life was despaired of. Mr. Newcomer was in Frederick City preaching on Sunday, the 15th, when he received the intelligence of this serious sickness. Although it was winter, he started on Monday morning long before daylight, as early as four o'clock, to ride to Baltimore, reaching that city by night. In his Journal he makes the statement that he "found Otterbein very ill indeed, and in great pains; he requested me to pray for him. On account of his great weakness he could converse but very little." On the next morning he found Mr. Otterbein slightly improved, and says again: "We held a long conversation together. Among other things, he said we should only prove faithful to the work which was so auspiciously begun, and the Lord would certainly be with us and continue unto us his blessings. Towards evening his pains increased again. He inquired of those around the bed whether I was present. Being answered in the affirmative, I drew to him, and asked what he desired. 'O Christian,' said he, 'my pains are so severe and with-

out intermission that without the assisting grace of God I must sink, for my strength will shortly be exhausted. Do pray that the Lord may graciously lend me his assistance, and, if according to his holy will, suffer my pains to moderate.' We sang a few verses of a hymn. Brother Ettinger, who was also present, and myself prayed and besought a throne of grace in his behalf. Before we had concluded, the pains abated, and in a short time he fell into a slumber." Mr. Newcomer remained with Mr. Otterbein during the next forenoon, when, after commending him once more to God in prayer, he bade him what he thought was in all probability a final farewell. On extending to him his hand, Mr. Otterbein said, with great emphasis: "The God of Abraham be with thee and bless thee. Remember me at a throne of grace."<sup>1</sup>

From this illness Mr. Otterbein recovered, but never regained his accustomed strength. Special assistance was provided for him in the care of his congregation in Baltimore, and instead of going out to assist his brethren in their services at communion or other occasions, as he had so often done, they now came to assist him. Newcomer's *Journal* has frequent entries noting his visits, and those of other ministers, to Baltimore to assist the dear venerable father whom they so tenderly loved, so as to make his burdens of service lighter. He was yet to live nearly eight years before his departure from earthly toil, but during these years he remained within the city, except to spend occasionally a day with friends near by. During his ministry through these years his congregation continued to bestow upon him their tenderest affection, while they lightened the burden of his labors to the extent of their power. There was no haste to dismiss from service a faithful pastor because he ceased to possess the vigor of his

<sup>1</sup> Newcomer's *Journal*, pp. 141, 142.

mature manhood. At eighty years and up to eighty-seven they welcomed joyfully his presence in the pulpit, and lavished upon him every token of filial love.

The time was now at length approaching when toil must cease, and the great man be called to his reward. But there were some important duties yet to be performed by him, and among these was that of giving regular ordination to some of his brethren upon whom his mantle was soon to fall. The story of this ordination is thus told by Bishop Newcomer, who had in the previous spring, on May 7, 1813, been elected to the office of bishop.<sup>1</sup> The entry as to the ordination is thus made in Bishop Newcomer's Journal :<sup>2</sup>

"October 1st—This morning we came to Baltimore. Old Father Otterbein is very weak and feeble in body, but strong and vigorous in spirit, and full of hope of a blissful immortality and eternal life. He was greatly rejoiced at our arrival, and informed me that he had received a letter from the brethren in the West,<sup>3</sup> wherein he was requested to ordain me, by the laying on of hands, to the office of elder and preacher of the gospel, before his departure; adding, 'I have always considered myself too unworthy to perform this solemn injunction of the apostle, but now I perceive the necessity of doing so before I shall be removed.' He then requested to know whether I had any

<sup>1</sup> Newcomer's *Journal*, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 220.

<sup>3</sup> The letter here referred to by Bishop Otterbein was an official communication from the Miami Conference, citing action taken at its session of 1813, touching the subject of ordination by the laying on of hands. On pages 20 and 21 of the Miami Conference journal the following entries are found:

"The mode of ordination was next taken up, as also the manner of receiving preachers. It is lamented that too little order has been attended to in receiving preachers, as well as ordaining. The conference, therefore, has taken it into consideration whether it is proper that a preacher should be ordained without the laying on of the hands of an elder."

"After reading . . . , singing, and prayer, took up the subject of ordination. Agreed that a petition be sent to Father Otterbein, requesting him to ordain one or more preachers by laying on of hands, who may perform the office for others."

Following this action a letter was prepared and approved by the conference, to be sent to Bishop Otterbein. In accordance with the request so made, the three brethren here named were duly ordained.



objection to make, and, if not, whether the present would not be a suitable time. I replied, that I firmly believed solemn ordination to the ministry had been enjoined and practiced by the apostles; therefore, if in his opinion the performance of the act should be thought necessary and beneficial, I had no objection . . . , but would cheerfully consent. Only one request I would wish to make—that, as Brothers Joseph Hoffman and Frederick Schaffer were present, he should ordain them at the same time. To this he readily assented, and immediately appointed the following day for the solemn performance of this duty.

“October 2d—This forenoon the vestry and several other members of the church assembled at the house of Father Otterbein. The old man addressed us in so spiritual and powerful a manner that all beheld him with astonishment. It appeared as if he had received particular unction from above to perform this solemn act. After addressing a throne of grace with great fervency for a blessing, he called on Brother William Ryland, an elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who had been invited for the purpose, to assist him in the ordination. We were accordingly ordained to the office of elders in the ministry by the laying on of hands. John Hildt, a member of the vestry, had been appointed secretary. He executed certificates of ordination to each of us, in the German and English languages, which certificates were then signed by Father William Otterbein and delivered to each of us. At night we preached in the church. I lodged with Otterbein.”<sup>1</sup>

The scene presented in these ordination ceremonies was one of profoundest interest. The aged father was too feeble to stand, and delivered his address in a sitting posture, having first been assisted from his couch to a chair. He was again assisted to his feet when he arose to lay his

<sup>1</sup> *Newcomer's Journal*, pp. 219, 220.



hands upon the heads of the candidates. Thus, under circumstances of the deepest solemnity, the venerable patriarch conferred his final blessing upon his successors, making a special point in his address, as Dr. Drury observes, "against being precipitate in the ordinations that it would devolve upon them to confer." The importance of this ordination in one sense will be noted in the fact that one of these men, Mr. Newcomer, was already a bishop, and another, Mr. Hoffman, was destined to be such afterward. Thus, through these men, if ordination in the regular historical sense possesses any value, the United Brethren ministry have derived their authority in line from the apostles, Bishop Otterbein himself having been regularly ordained in the Reformed Church in Germany before coming to America. This ordination was simply an ordination to the ministry, and not to the office of bishop.

The following is a copy of one of these certificates of ordination, that of Joseph Hoffman :

Know all men whom it may concern, that Joseph Hoffman, this 2d day of October, 1813, in the presence of the subscribers, leaders of the congregation in Baltimore, by the Rev. William Otterbein, in conjunction with and with the assistance of William Ryland, an elder of the Methodist society in Baltimore, by the laying on of hands, is duly and solemnly ordained. We desire and pray that his labors in the vineyard of the Lord may prove a blessing to many souls.

Given this 2d day of October, 1813.

(WITNESS.)

JOHN HILDT, *Secretary.*

WILLIAM BACKER.

{ SEAL. }

BALTZER SCHAEFFER.

{ SEAL. }

GOTTFRIED SUMWALT.

{ SEAL. }

JACOB SMITH.

{ SEAL. }

*A True Copy.*

WILLIAM OTTERBEIN.

Mr. Ryland, whom the Bishop invited to assist him in the ordination, was a man of brilliant qualities, being esteemed one of the foremost pulpit orators of his day. He was for a number of years chaplain of the United States Senate, and possessed the highest esteem of the leading statesmen of the period.

The day following the ordination ceremonies being the Sabbath, these brethren conducted a communion service in Otterbein's church. Bishop Newcomer makes in his Journal the following entry: "This forenoon Brother Hoffman preached first; I followed him. Brother Schaffer assisted in the administration of the Lord's supper. A great many persons came to the table of the Lord with contrite hearts and streaming eyes. This was truly a day of grace to many souls. Unto God be all the glory."

On the next day Bishop Newcomer and Mr. Hoffman left the city. On bidding farewell to Mr. Otterbein he exhorted them to faithfulness, assuring them that God's blessing would rest upon their work. His last words to them were: "Farewell. If any inquire after me, tell them I die in the faith I have preached."<sup>1</sup>

The time of the end was now rapidly approaching. The asthmatic affection from which he had been suffering increased in severity, and his strength was steadily yielding. In a little more than six weeks from this time he was to make his exit from life. When it was apparent that the end was near, a number of friends gathered about his bed. Dr. J. D. Kurtz, of the Lutheran Church, offered the last audible prayer before death came, at the close of which Otterbein responded: "Amen, amen! It is finished." A little later he quoted the words of the aged Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

<sup>1</sup> Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, p. 361.

For a few moments it seemed as if he would not speak again. But, rallying once more, he said, "Jesus, Jesus, I die, but thou livest, and soon I shall live with thee." Then, turning again to his friends about him, he continued: "The conflict is over and past. I begin to feel an unspeakable fullness of love and peace divine. Lay my head upon my pillow, and be still." Mr. Spayth adds: "Stillness reigned in the chamber of death,—no, not of death; the chariot of Israel had come. 'See,' whispered one, 'how sweet, how easy he breathes.' A smile, a fresh glow lighted up his countenance, and, behold, it was death."

Dr. Drury, in remarking upon this closing scene, impressively says: "It is scarcely too much to say that in the long list of dying utterances of eminent saints nothing can be found more profoundly fitting or truly sublime than the dying words of Otterbein. . . . He died as he lived, with commanding composure and subdued greatness."

Bishop Otterbein's death occurred on Wednesday, November 17, 1813, at ten o'clock in the evening. His age was eighty-seven years, five months, and fourteen days. Sixty-five years had been spent in the ministry of the gospel of Christ. The funeral services were held on Saturday morning following. The exercises were conducted by Rev. Dr. Kurtz of the Lutheran Church, Rev. William Ryland of the Methodist Church, and Rev. George Dashiels of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Dr. Kurtz preached a sermon in German, from the words, "Call the laborers, and give them their hire."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ryland followed in English, and Mr. Dashiels conducted the service at the grave. It was most fitting that Mr. Schaffer, the only United Brethren minister in the city, should be chief among the mourners. Newcomer, Hoffman, Christian Crum, and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 20: 8.

Jacob Baulus were away in Pennsylvania, and there was then no telegraph, nor any swift-moving mail trains, by which to notify them of the death of the great chief. It was most beautiful, too, that this good man, who had been so broad and all-embracing in his sympathies, should have devout men of several denominations utter words of sorrow and love about his cherished remains.

When Newcomer heard of Mr. Otterbein's death, he wrote in his diary, "He is called to his everlasting home, where he rests from his labors, and his works will follow him." Asbury received the news with deepest sorrow, and exclaimed: "Is Father Otterbein dead? Great and good man of God! An honor to his church and country! One of the greatest scholars and divines that ever came to America, or born in it. Alas, the chiefs of the Germans are gone to their rest and reward, taken from the evil to come."

Kurtz and Ryland and Dashields were all in thorough sympathy with Bishop Otterbein in his work as leader of the Germans in the great revival movement.

The remains of Bishop Otterbein were interred in the small cemetery connected with the church in which he had so long preached, near the entrance way on the Conway Street side. The church was built during his pastorate, and, though now antiquated in outward appearance, remains as a substantial link uniting the present to the past. A modest marble slab covers his grave, above which, sustained by four low columns, rests another of equal size, bearing an inscription. But the real monument to his memory is the growing and actively aggressive Christian denomination of which, under the Divine leading, he became the founder.

The relations existing between the two great leaders, Bishop Otterbein, of the United Brethren Church, and



Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were of a nature so tender and strong that, though often referred to in these pages, a few further words ought here to be placed on record. From the time of their meeting in Baltimore in 1774, on Mr. Otterbein's first advent to that city, a warm mutual attachment sprang up. This friendship, notwithstanding their disparity in years,—Mr. Otterbein being nearly twenty years the senior of Mr. Asbury,—ripened into one of almost romantic character. Frequent allusions occur in Asbury's "Journal" to visits made to the "great and good Otterbein," as he took delight in calling him. Rev. Henry Boehm, in his "Reminiscences," says: "They were united by a threefold cord stronger than death, and lasting as their existence. They never met without complying with the apostolic injunction, 'Salute one another with an holy kiss.'" <sup>1</sup> Mr. Boehm was intimately acquainted with both of these men, being for a number of years the traveling companion of Asbury, and preaching for Otterbein at different times in his church, and being a guest in his parsonage.<sup>2</sup>

This high mutual regard led Mr. Asbury to desire that Mr. Otterbein assist in the ceremonies when he was consecrated to the office of a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first General Conference of the Methodist Church was held in the city of Baltimore, in December, 1784, a body consisting, not of delegates chosen for the purpose, but of all the ministers of the church who answered to a general call for the meeting. It was presided over by Dr. Coke, whom Mr. Wesley had especially consecrated as superintendent of the work in America. Mr. Asbury, though he had been preaching since he was sixteen years of age and had now been in America for eleven years, was as yet unordained, and held

<sup>1</sup> Boehm's *Reminiscences*, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



properly the rank of a lay preacher, giving himself to the preaching of the word only, and not administering the ordinances. On the first day of the conference, December 25, he was ordained by Dr. Coke to the office of a deacon, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey assisting. Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey held the rank of elders, ordained as such by Mr. Wesley. On the second day Mr. Asbury was ordained to the office of an elder, the same elders assisting. On the third he was ordained to the office of bishop. Before this last consecration he requested that Mr. Otterbein be associated with the other ministers in the solemn ceremonies, and it was accordingly so done.

Bishop Asbury preached a special sermon upon the death of Bishop Boehm, and some months after the death of Bishop Otterbein he also preached a sermon on Otterbein's life and labors in the pulpit which he had so long honored. In the sermon on Boehm he made these references to Otterbein, in connection with Guething and Boehm : "Preëminent among these is William Otterbein, who assisted in the ordination which set apart your speaker to the superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church. William Otterbein was regularly ordained to the ministry in the German Presbyterian Church. He is one of the best scholars and the greatest divines in America. Why, then, is he not where he began? He was irregular. Alas for us! the zealous are necessarily so to those whose cry has been, 'Put me into the priest's office, that I may eat a morsel of bread.' . . . Such was not Boehm; such is not Otterbein; and now his sun of life is setting in brightness. Behold the saint of God leaning upon his staff, waiting for the chariots of Israel."<sup>1</sup>

In March, 1814, the Methodist conference held its session in Baltimore, Bishops Asbury and McKendree presiding. The conference requested Bishop Asbury to preach a

<sup>1</sup> Bangs's *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Vol. II., p. 371.

sermon on Bishop Otterbein. The service was held in Otterbein's church, being attended by the entire conference, Mr. Otterbein's bereft congregation, and many of the ministers of the city. In reference to this occasion Bishop Asbury made the following minute in his diary: "By request I discoursed on the character of the angel of the church of Philadelphia, in allusion to P. W. Otterbein, the holy, the great Otterbein, whose funeral discourse it was intended to be. Solemnity marked the silent meeting in the German church, where were assembled the members of our conference and many of the clergy of the city. Forty years have I known the retiring modesty of this man of God, towering majestic above his fellows in learning, wisdom, and grace, yet seeking to be known only of God and the people of God."

On the appearance and personal peculiarities of Bishop Otterbein, Rev. Henry Boehm, in his "Reminiscences," remarks: "In person he was tall, being six feet high, with a noble frame and a commanding appearance. He had a thoughtful, open countenance, full of benignity, and a dark-bluish eye that was very expressive. In reading the lessons he used spectacles, which he would take off and hold in his left hand while speaking. He had a high forehead, a double chin, with a beautiful dimple in the center. His locks were gray, his dress parsonic."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Abel Stevens, in his "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," says of him: "Otterbein was large, and very commanding in his personal appearance, with a prominent forehead, upon which the seal of the Lord seemed to be plainly impressed. His Christian kindness and benevolence knew no bounds, and all he received, like Wesley, he gave away in charities."<sup>2</sup> Interesting

<sup>1</sup> Boehm's *Reminiscences*, p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Vol. I., pp. 219, 220.

illustrations of Bishop Otterbein's practical charity are given in Dr. Drury's *Life of Otterbein*.<sup>1</sup>

The extreme scantiness of Bishop Otterbein's literary remains has been frequently remarked upon. A few of his letters—the original autographs—are in the vaults of the United Brethren Publishing House, at Dayton. A manuscript volume of Latin sermons was known to exist until 1853, since which time it cannot be found. In 1851 Prof. John Haywood, of Otterbein University, examined the collection, and translated one of the sermons. A sketch of a sermon preached at the Conference of 1801 remains. The sermon was based on Jude 20-25. The leading topics of the treatment were: 1. The sanctity of the ministerial office. 2. The character of the men that should take upon them this office. They must be men of faith, of prayer, and full of the Holy Ghost. 3. The duties of the office. 4. Its great responsibilities.

Bishop Otterbein read and used the Latin language with great ease, and appears to have been thoroughly familiar with the Greek and the Hebrew. But he was not much given to writing, and no published volumes from his pen remain.<sup>2</sup>

The closeness of intimacy between the leaders of the United Brethren and Methodist Episcopal churches, as seen in the foregoing pages, was a most striking feature of that early formative period, and thus it becomes easy to account for the close resemblance between the two churches in general organization and polity. The itinerant method of ministerial supply, the episcopacy, the sub-episcopacy, or presiding-eldership, quadrennial, annual, and quarterly conferences, all are common to both churches. The general forms of worship are closely identical. The general doctrines of the two churches are the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 322-325.

<sup>2</sup> See Drury's *Life of Otterbein*, Chap. XVI.

same, both being Arminian. It cannot, however, be said that the United Brethren derived their Arminianism from the Methodist Church. Otterbein and Wesley both had their birth and early training in churches at least mildly Calvinistic. We have already seen in these pages that in the school of Herborn, where Otterbein received his education, there was much liberty as to religious faith, and Calvinistic teaching was not insisted upon with much emphasis;<sup>1</sup> and, further, that the thirteenth article of compact under which Otterbein's congregation in Baltimore was organized distinctly provided, "No preacher can stay among us who teacheth the doctrine of predestination, or the impossibility of falling from grace, and who holdeth them as doctrinal points."<sup>2</sup> Neither was the prayer-meeting derived from the Methodist Church, Otterbein having been accustomed to hold regularly these meetings in Germany before coming to America, and in America before his advent to Baltimore, or his meeting with Asbury. The class-meeting, in its more specific forms, as earlier known among the United Brethren, was doubtless derived from the Methodist Church. The itinerant system came slowly into favor, its great efficiency in the Methodist Church commending it. But not only the leaders, but many others of the ministers and people, holding common convictions as to conversion and a spiritual life, commingled freely in the "great meetings" and in services in the churches and private houses, occupied each other's pulpits without jealousy or fear that either would gain an advantage over the other, and rejoiced together in the most fraternal way when precious harvests of souls were gathered into the kingdom. It was therefore most natural that in the polity and general life of the two denominations, one seeking almost exclusively to give the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 27.<sup>2</sup> See p. 94.



gospel to the Germans, and the other as exclusively to the English, there should arise the close similarity which has characterized the two churches. Hence, also, while the United Brethren Church is in no historic sense an offshoot from the Methodist Church, its origin being entirely separate and distinct, its typical characteristics have naturally classed it with the Methodist family of churches. This fact also has been courteously recognized by the Methodist Episcopal Church in inviting the United Brethren to send properly accredited delegates to the Methodist Ecumenical Councils, in London in 1881, and in Washington City in 1891, invitations which were accepted in the same spirit in which they were given.

To these fraternal relationships between the Methodist and United Brethren churches, Dr. J. M. Buckley, in his valuable "History of the Methodists in the United States," just published as the fifth volume of the "American Church History Series," makes this friendly allusion: "The United Brethren in Christ is supposed by many to be a branch of American Methodism. The association between their founders and the similarity of their origin have often been noted. When Asbury was consecrated to the office of bishop, William Otterbein, who more than any other deserves the name of the founder of the United Brethren, was requested by Asbury to assist in the service, and the affectionate relation continues between all branches of Methodism and the United Brethren."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *American Church History Series*, Vol. V., pp. 615, 616.



## FOURTH PERIOD—1815-1837

### CHAPTER XIII

#### THE FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE—1815

##### I. PREPARATION FOR THE CONFERENCE.

THE year 1815 marks a notable era in the history of the United Brethren Church, as that in which the first General Conference was held. The two annual conferences, the old conference of the East and the Miami of the West, were widely separated geographically, and there could be but little interchange of attendance of members of either at the annual sessions of the other beyond that of an occasional visit. No authorized bishop was present at the sessions of the Miami Conference until after the election of Bishop Newcomer, in 1813, and the Discipline as then existing did not constitute a strong bond of union. The Eastern Conference, since its first regular session in 1800, had been accustomed to transact all business for the Church, and now that the conference of the West had rapidly grown into strength and importance it is quite possible that its position was not sufficiently recognized by the brethren of the East. This may have been especially the case when the old conference elected a bishop in the year 1813, and again in May, 1814, and also when it adopted a body of rules for the government of the Church. No representatives of the Western conference were present to bear a part in these important proceedings, and it seems probable that the Eastern Conference, relying upon its

past prestige, did not think it necessary to consult the Western brethren.

However this may have been, the Miami Conference, at its session of August, 1814, uttered a protest against the Rules of Discipline, and resolved that a convention, or General Conference, composed of delegates representing all portions of the Church, should be called to frame a body of rules. The following is a literal translation of a portion of the minutes of 1814:

The present order [or Discipline] of the Church was taken under consideration and protested against.<sup>1</sup> It was moved and adopted that there shall be a convention, and that two members from each district shall assemble at Abraham Draksel's in Westmoreland County. The districts were arranged as follows:<sup>2</sup> . . . The delegates shall come together November 2; the time, however, was set forward to June next year. This convention shall form a church-constitution for the Brethren.

The record as a whole gives the impression that considerable warmth characterized the discussion.

Mr. Spayth, in his history of the Church, makes the following statement of the steps leading to the holding of the proposed conference:

"The conference in the East met at Hagerstown, in Maryland, May 24, 1814. Here the demand for an improved and printed Discipline was under consideration, and two manuscript copies were laid on the table, one by Brother Christopher Grosch, and the other by Brother C. Newcomer. A General Conference was anticipated, but no definite action was had in the premises,<sup>3</sup> from a desire to consult the conference in the West, which was to meet at the house of Brother Andrew Zeller, near German-

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the Discipline adopted earlier in the year by the Eastern Conference.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> The statement that "two manuscript copies" for a proposed Discipline "were laid on the table," and that "no definite action was had" because a General Conference was anticipated, is to be taken in a guarded sense. First, there are strong indications that only one manuscript copy was presented, and

town, Ohio, August 23, 1814. Brother C. Newcomer was requested to call the attention of that conference to the contemplated plan of a General Conference, to be held the ensuing year, leaving the mode for the election of delegates to the Miami Conference to determine. This conference most cheerfully took up the subject, and recommended that the members which were to meet in General Conference should be elected from among the preachers from all parts of the Church, by a majority of the votes of the members in the Church.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Drury, who has given most careful study to the early records, including some which were not in the possession of either Mr. Spayth or Mr. Lawrence, doubts the historical accuracy of this statement of Mr. Spayth. In an article in the *United Brethren Quarterly Review*<sup>2</sup> Dr. Drury says:

“It may be observed that the Eastern Conference, the only conference up to 1810, when the Miami Conference was formed, transacted all of the business for the Church, its records, however, being very meager and defective. In 1814 the Miami Conference, which in the four years of its existence had a rapid growth, felt itself entitled to share in the government of the Church, and therefore proposed the formation of a General Conference, and made all necessary arrangements as to the time and place of meeting and the mode of electing delegates, which arrangements were acquiesced in by the Eastern Conference.”

Whatever Mr. Spayth’s knowledge of the facts may have been, it is well known that his education was chiefly in the

that this copy was signed by Grosch and Newcomer; and, second, there are equally strong indications, in certain features which were afterward changed or eliminated, that this Discipline was at that time adopted, becoming the Discipline called the Discipline of 1814. Of these is Article 2, which provides for the election of bishops *every three years*. (See *Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814–1841*.) Under this provision Christian Newcomer was, at this conference of 1814, elected to the office of bishop for three years. The article was amended by the General Conference which followed, making the time four years.

<sup>1</sup> Spayth’s *History*, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. III., p. 35.

German language (he was born in Germany), and quite defective in the English, so that the manuscript for his history had to undergo severe revision before it could be given to the printer. This work was done by Mr. Lawrence, who was allowed to use great liberty with the manuscript.

Two or three things may here be said: First, the minutes of the Eastern Conference for 1814, or any other year, are absolutely silent as to any contemplated General Conference. From this, therefore, as an official source, nothing can be proved. Second, the minutes of the Miami Conference contain no reference to any communication, either oral or in writing, from the Eastern Conference relative to any proposed General Conference. The entire record of the Miami Conference is that which has been quoted above, together with that relating to voting districts for the election of delegates, to be presently referred to.

And yet this silence of the minutes of both the conferences is not to be taken as proof conclusive in the premises. The minutes of the Conference of 1800 are equally silent as to the election of Otterbein and Boehm as bishops, and those of the General Conference of 1815 tell us nothing of the essential things which were done there, the very object for which the conference was assembled. The facts in these instances are established by evidence from independent and unofficial sources. A probable solution may be found in the supposition that the brethren of the Eastern Conference felt some misgivings as to the propriety of retaining the legislative functions wholly in their own hands, and that they discussed the question of a General Conference in an unofficial way, with the understood wish that Bishop Newcomer convey their thoughts to the brethren of the West, while no record of their discussion or action on the subject was made in the minutes.



But whether the statement in Mr. Spayth's history be correct or not in regard to "leaving the mode for the election of delegates" to the General Conference "to the Miami Conference to determine," it is certain that this is what the Miami Conference did. Referring again to the official record, we find that they decided to divide the entire territory of the Church into ten districts, each district to be entitled to two delegates. The following are the districts, as shown by the minutes: First district, Baltimore; second, Hagerstown; third, Carlisle; fourth, Pennsylvania south of the Alleghanies; fifth, Pennsylvania north of the Alleghanies; sixth, Muskingum; seventh, New Lancaster, Ohio; eighth, Miami; ninth, Indiana and Kentucky; tenth, Virginia.

Thus early in the history of the Church was the entire membership asked to give expression to its will by a popular vote. The election of delegates to this highest body, the General Conference, has remained permanently with the people. Once in every four years the entire denomination has the opportunity for uttering its voice, with only such modification of methods and ratios of representation as the General Conference from time to time may deem just, thus preserving all ultimate power in the hands of the people.

A further and very important reason for assembling a General Conference lay in the fact that the Rules of Discipline existed up to this time only in the briefest form. They were excellent as far as they extended, but quite too limited in the ground covered to meet the requirements of a growing denomination.<sup>1</sup> The methods of

<sup>1</sup> Of the number of followers gathered by Otterbein and his co-laborers, during Otterbein's life-time, Bishop Asbury makes this estimate: "We feel ourselves at liberty to believe that these German heralds of grace congregated one hundred thousand souls; that they have had twenty thousand in fellowship and communion, and one hundred zealous and acceptable preachers." See Dr. Nathan Bangs's *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, Vol. II., p. 374; also pp. 370, 371.

administration needed to find fuller expression in an appropriate way, and a General Conference alone could make them finally authoritative. In addition to this was the fact that the Discipline, brief as it was, remained as yet unprinted. This proved frequently a serious hindrance to the preachers, especially when going into the places where the Church was unknown, as they found it difficult to answer authoritatively the reasonable inquiries of the people concerning the Church which they represented. The Eastern Conference appreciated this difficulty, and at their session of 1813 placed on their minutes the following action :

*Resolved*, That the Confession of Faith and the Christian Discipline of the United Brethren in Christ be printed.

Whether this resolution was carried into effect cannot now be known, as no printed copies of that date are known to exist. The same is true also of the Discipline of 1814.

## II. THE CONFERENCE.

The election of delegates to the General Conference was duly held, and at the appointed time, June 6, 1815, fourteen out of the twenty who were chosen were found to be present. The place selected for the conference, near Mount Pleasant, in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, was fairly midway between the eastern and western sections of the Church. The delegates, as classified by States, were found to be as follows :

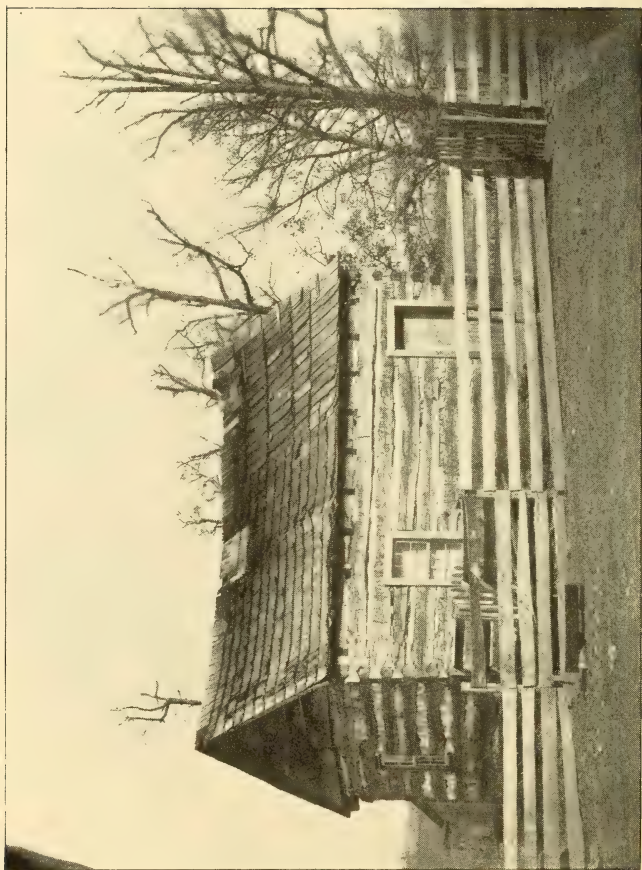
*Pennsylvania*—Abraham Mayer, Henry Kumler, John Snyder, Abraham Draksel, Christian Berger.

*Maryland*—Christian Newcomer, Jacob Baulus.

*Virginia*—Christian Crum, Isaac Niswander, Henry G. Spayth.

*Ohio*—Andrew Zeller, Abraham Hiestand, Daniel Troyer, George Benedum.





BONNET'S SCHOOL-HOUSE.



Among those elected, but not present on account of sickness, was Joseph Hoffman, then pastor of the Otterbein Church, in Baltimore.

The place of meeting was a country school-house, known as John Bonnet's, a very humble place indeed for the assembling of this body, whose counsels were to affect the faith and life of generations of devout followers. The location is about one mile east of Mount Pleasant, on the old turnpike road leading across the Alleghanies. It was named for Mr. Bonnet, a member of the United Brethren Church. Near it was the home of Abraham Draksel, then far advanced in years. The great beauty of the natural scenery about the place has been often remarked. In this secluded spot, far from the great city with its lofty spires and deep-toned bells, its daily press and ubiquitous reporters, from telegraph wires then undreamed of, from all the imposing circumstances so often attending important religious assemblies, this body of ministers met to discharge the grave trust committed to them. The ministers themselves were men of humble appearance, as were the fishermen and tax-gatherers who followed the call of Jesus when he summoned them to the apostolate. Some of them, of Mennonite antecedents, adhered to the plain garb of their fathers, and might have thought it even sinful to dress according to the ways of "the world," as did their brethren of a sister denomination, whose first General Conference forbade giving tickets for the class-meeting to any who wore fashionable dress or superfluous ornaments.

As one looks over the list of names, it is found, too, that none were distinguished for learning, none bore titles as doctors of divinity, or were known to literature, or eminent in any special sense as men recognize eminence. Yet they were men of strong, plain sense, well versed in

the Scriptures which they preached, familiar with the fundamental elements of Christian doctrine, and, withal, devout, earnest, laborious, faithful servants of the gospel to whose promulgation they were called. Not widely different, indeed, were they from that company of plain toilers whom Jesus gathered about him, and to whom he committed the building of the kingdom after his departure. Nearly or perhaps quite all of them had personal acquaintance with Otterbein; all of them possessed something of the spirit which he infused into the hearts of his followers.

Bishop Newcomer presided, Andrew Zeller assisting. Mr. Zeller opened the session with Scripture reading and prayer. Jacob Baulus and Henry G. Spayth were then elected secretaries, and the first General Conference of the United Brethren Church was organized for business. As the brethren looked upon one another, they felt sadly the loss of the great leaders who had been transferred to the church triumphant. Good men indeed were they who sat at the head, but all missed the majestic personality of Otterbein, the saintly presence of Boehm, and the magnetic power of the eloquent Guething. Indeed, for a time, the conference, in the absence of strong leadership, seems to have had rough sailing—more discord in the proceedings than harmony. So says Mr. Spayth, and so notes Newcomer in his diary. Perhaps it may not be amiss to hear Mr. Spayth tell of this storm which seemed to threaten the conference, and of the shining out of the bright rainbow of peace:

“Nor will we disguise the truth,” says Mr. Spayth in his history; “the sky was not exactly clear. A heavy atmosphere would ever and anon press and swell the bosom, and then came ruffling breezes and sharp words. This could not last long. The darkening clouds which hung over the conference must be cleared away. A calm

atmosphere and a clear sky could not be dispensed with. A pause ensued. The conference agreed to humble themselves before God in prayer. And such a prayer-meeting your humble servant never witnessed before nor since. Brethren with streaming eyes embraced and thanked God. From that hour to the end unanimity and love smiled joyously on that assembly.

“Permit a special notice here. Nothing perhaps was anticipated with greater certainty by any delegate in going to that conference, than that the meeting should take place in the sweetest and most humble subordination to each other, each esteeming his brother higher than himself, and worthy of more honor. But the spirit of the children of Zebedee and their mother is still visible on such occasions, and never more so than when wise and good rulers, either in church or state, are removed by death. For who should have sufficient wisdom, who should be so well qualified to take the helm and guide the vessel safely as the Zebedees? And should a doubt be raised, they are ready to answer, We are able.

“Our last word when we made the digression was, ‘smiled joyously on that assembly.’ Here were dear brethren who had stood long and stood firmly in the cause of God and man. The spirit of ambition had vanished; its shadow was seen no more. The brethren, it was manifest, had but one eye, one ear, one soul, one great thought, and that was to form a Discipline containing the fewest sections or divisions practicable, and in as few words as the grave subject would admit of, in order to convey the sense and meaning of church rules, as held by the United Brethren in Christ.

“After mature deliberation, the conference found it good and expedient to deliver the Confession of Faith and Rules of Discipline to the Church, in love and humility, with the

sincere desire that the doctrine and rules, together with the Word of God, might be attended to and strictly observed.”<sup>1</sup>

### III. THE CONFESSION OF FAITH AND RULES OF DISCIPLINE OF 1815.

The Book of Discipline, as agreed upon and set forth by this first General Conference, comprises two parts, namely, first, a Confession of Faith, and, secondly, a body of rules for the government of the Church. Both the Confession and the rules are based upon the earlier body called the Discipline of 1814, but which existed in 1813. The Confession was substantially that adopted by the Conference of 1789. The rules also are distinctly traced back through the earlier Disciplines to the rules adopted for Otterbein's church in 1785.<sup>2</sup>

The introduction to the Discipline as adopted by this General Conference is a historical statement which is preserved in the introductory statement as found in our Discipline now. Then follows "Section First," the "Confession of Faith," and after it seven additional sections, the Rules of Discipline proper. No practical movement was made for the adoption of a constitution until the conferences of 1837 and 1841.

The Confession of Faith, as adopted by the conference, is brief, simple, comprehensive, and really beautiful, lacking in some essentials of a compact statement of Christian doctrine, and yet worthy of a most honorable place among the creeds which have been framed through the ages to express Christian belief. The whole is comprised in seven articles, as follows :

[1.] In the name of God we confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; that

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, pp. 150, 151.

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller presentation of this see Professor Drury's Introduction to *Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841*.



these three are one, the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence with both ; that this triune God created heaven and earth, and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

[2.] We believe in Jesus Christ ; that he is very God and man ; that he, by the Holy Ghost, assumed his human nature in Mary, and was born of her ; that he is the Saviour and Redeemer of the whole human race, if they with faith in him accept the grace proffered in Jesus ; that this Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us, was buried, rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God to intercede for us ; and that he shall come again at the last day, to judge the living and the dead.

[3.] We believe in the Holy Ghost ; that he is equal in being with the Father and the Son ; that he proceeds from both ; that we are through him enlightened ; through faith justified and sanctified.

[4.] We believe in a holy church, communion of saints, resurrection of the flesh, and a life everlasting.

[5.] We believe that the Bible, Old and New Testament, is the word of God ; that it contains the true way to our salvation ; that every true Christian is bound to receive it, with the influences of the Spirit of God, as his only rule, and that without faith in Jesus Christ, true penitence, forgiveness of sins, and following after Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

[6.] We believe that the doctrine which the Holy Scriptures contain, namely, the fall in Adam and the redemption through Jesus Christ, shall be preached throughout the whole world.

[7.] We believe that the outward means of grace are to be in use in all Christian societies ; namely : that baptism and the remembrance of the death of the Lord in the distribution of the bread and wine are to be in use among his children, according to the command of the Lord Jesus ; the mode and manner, however, shall be left to the judgment of every one. Also, the example of feet-washing remains free to every one.

After this follow seven additional sections, comprehending the Rules of Discipline, very complete in their provisions for the government of a church whose life was yet in the simplicity of its earlier years. The first of these, "Section Second," relates to the General and annual conferences. The General Conference is to be held every four years. This is the general provision. This conference itself, however, provided for a session to be held after two

years, for an earlier and fuller consideration of some of the things done by it. The third section refers to bishops—their election, ordination, powers, and duties. The feature providing for a special ordination for bishops was stricken out in 1825 as being not supported, as was believed, by Scripture precedent. The remaining sections, from four to eight, refer to presiding elders, their election and functions, to elders, their ordination and duties, to preachers generally, the method of receiving them, their office and duties, to method of procedure against preachers in case of immoral conduct, and to members in general. The whole is very succinctly stated, and is essentially the same as found in the Discipline now on these subjects, only such modifications having been made from time to time as were suggested by experience.

The Discipline as thus formed was ordered to be printed. The publication seems to have been deferred until the year following, and hence the title-page of this first printed Discipline, as previously stated, bears the date of 1816.<sup>1</sup>

It should be observed here that this General Conference did not take it upon itself to create a new Confession of Faith, or to make new rules for the government of the Church. The Confession of Faith varies but slightly in expression from the admirable instrument adopted by the Conference of 1789, in which the skillful hand of Otterbein was so plainly visible. And the rules are simply a well-crystallized expression of the previous practice of the Church. The itinerant system of ministerial supply, already so well tested for its efficiency, was more clearly defined and adopted as the settled policy of the Church. The essential features of this system included bishops, presiding elders, and pastors.

It is noticeable that the same spirit of generous and

<sup>1</sup> See p. 166.

brotherly concession was manifest in this first General Conference as in the Conference of 1789. The freedom of conscience, for example, as to mode of baptism, was again distinctly provided for, so that those deriving their church lineage and education from Reformed sources could be free to sprinkle, and those from Mennonite or other sources could baptize by pouring or immersion.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE.

The beneficial results following the first General Conference were most marked. There had been, since the death of Otterbein, a somewhat widespread feeling of doubt as to whether the Church would be able to hold permanently together. This feeling was the stronger because within so brief a period the three most distinguished leaders had been removed by death. Others, indeed, remained, or were soon to rise up and take their places, but they were as yet untried. The government of the Church, which had before derived its strength from its leaders rather than from a well-crystallized system, was now actually weak. The itinerant system, so far, existed chiefly in name, the preachers, nearly all,—though many of them traveled extensively,—being classed as local. Many of these men, indeed, were almost constantly in the work of preaching, but not as members of an organized system. Other elements of weakness existed, some of which were becoming quite apparent. Large hope was entertained as to the influence which a General Conference might exert in building the Church into strength, and these hopes were not doomed to disappointment. As a bond of union for the widely separated sections of the Church, as well as in providing wisely for its government and the operation of its working machinery,

<sup>1</sup> See earliest Confession of Faith, with remarks thereon, p. 137 ff.

the influence of the conference upon the Church was most beneficent, and it was felt that henceforth ministers and people could address themselves to their work with new assurance as to the future.

#### V. THE GERMAN THE EARLY LANGUAGE OF THE CHURCH.

It will be of interest to note here that the business of this General Conference, as of several others that followed, was conducted entirely in the German language. The German, as has been heretofore stated, was the language of the fathers of the Church. Otterbein, Boehm, and Guething used the German exclusively. Their mission was to the German population of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The preachers who arose from among their converts spoke the same tongue and extended the work among others speaking the same language. The first printed Discipline, that of 1815, appeared only in the German. But about this time a good many of the ministers began preaching also in the English language, while some came forward who used the English only. The General Conference of 1817, therefore, ordered a translation to be made, and accordingly in 1819, after a delay of two years, the book appeared in the English also, the German and the English being printed on opposite pages. As Mr. Spayth was secretary of the conference, the translation is believed to have been his work. The German continued to be the predominant language in the General Conference until 1833. In 1837 the Discipline appeared first in English, and the German version as a translation.<sup>1</sup>

The long delay of the Church in adopting the English as its principal tongue operated greatly against its growth. By an unavoidable necessity its field was narrowed, the

<sup>1</sup> See Professor Drury's Introduction to *Disciplines of the United Brethren in Christ, 1814-1841*, p. ix.



German population always constituting but a small fraction of the whole. The German-speaking people, too, were less progressive than their English neighbors, and this conservatism militated against a more rapid expansion. There was a constant tendency also among the Germans, just as we find it now, to drift over into the English. The children of the German families were steadily breaking away from the old moorings and finding homes in the English-speaking churches. The Methodist Episcopal Church, from its close resemblance to the United Brethren in doctrine, polity, and general church life, and from the intimate association of the ministers and people of the two denominations, naturally gained by far the largest share, while others gained in lesser numbers.

When once the transition from the German to the English became pronounced, the increase in membership began to proceed rapidly. A study of the statistics for the last half century presents in this regard some interesting features. Perhaps the fact is now rather to be deplored that the German has fallen so largely into the background. From the exclusive use of the German in the earlier years of the Church the change is so extreme that at the present time less than four per cent. of the congregations use that language.

The transition to the English naturally placed the Church in a position to spread its work among the people of original English descent, and so to draw large accessions from that source. But the fact remains unchanged that a great part of its people are the descendants of the early German settlers, chiefly in Pennsylvania and Maryland. These as a class, exiles in great part because of religious persecutions in the old countries, were a people possessing strength of character, high moral qualities, self-reliance, and thrift, and furnished through their descendants a great proportion of the best citizenship of the States of their

original settlement, as well as throughout the southern half of Ohio and westward.

#### VI. PERSONAL NOTES.

Before passing on from this first General Conference it will be fitting to pause and make a little closer acquaintance with the men who constituted this historic assembly.

##### 1. *Christian Newcomer.*

We have already seen that Christian Newcomer, after the death of Bishop Boehm, was elected his successor. This election was made in 1813, by the conference of the East, for one year. In 1814 he was reëlected for a term of three years. The General Conference convening in 1815, being higher in authority, elected him again for the two remaining years of the term. In 1817, and by each General Conference subsequently, he was elected for quadrennial terms, until death closed his labors in March, 1830. His life was one of the greatest activity. In the constancy and extent of his travels he surpassed all others of the early ministers of the Church. As earlier remarked, he was ever in the saddle, visiting congregations in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, making frequent trips across the mountains into western Pennsylvania and over into Ohio, and a few times into Indiana and Kentucky, holding annual conferences, visiting camp- and other great meetings, preaching to large and small congregations, often two and three times a day. The last summer of his life, when in his eightieth year, he attended no less than eight camp-meetings, preaching and otherwise assisting at all of them.

Bishop Newcomer's Journal, beginning in 1795, and continuing to his death, though intended by him only as a diary for his own private use, and never for publication,

has proved invaluable as a source of much that remains to us of early United Brethren history. It is prefaced by a brief autobiography, written in his eighty-first year. The notes, on account of their extreme brevity, are often disappointing, because they leave so much unsaid that we want to know. But as they were written for his own use only, no one, it may be supposed, has a right to complain, but there is cause rather for gratitude that so much of valuable material is left us. The records breathe a spirit of deep piety, and are characterized by cheerfulness and much spiritual rejoicing. This sweet spirit of gladness he retained quite to the end of his life. Among the notes near the close of the Journal is found, for example, the following: "This day I am so unwell that I am not able to leave my room. But, glory to my God, I can have sweet communion with him. Though solitary, I am not left alone. My Saviour is still with me, and continues the best of friends. Oh, how blessed is the condition of aged people, when they know that they have a reconciled God and Saviour."

The last entry in his Journal was made on March 4, just eight days before his death, with an evident presentiment that the end was near. On March 1, still retaining his buoyancy of spirit and his strong desire to be active in the Lord's work, he had started to make a trip into Virginia. Proceeding as far as Boonsborough, Maryland, he remained for the night. On the following morning, finding himself quite ill, he gave up his intended journey and returned to his home. His strength now declined rapidly, and on the 12th he answered the final call. His end was peaceful and blessed. Just before his death he requested a brother who was present to pray with him once more. Without asking assistance he arose from his bed and knelt down to join in the prayer. Rising, he

sought his couch again, and in a few moments his freed spirit passed on into the presence of the Master whom he had so devotedly served. Rev. Henry Kumler, Sen., afterward bishop, preached his funeral sermon in the German language, Rev. John Zahn following in English. It may be truthfully said that from the time of the death of the first great leaders, Otterbein, Guething, and Boehm, no other man in the denomination exerted so great an influence in building it up as did Bishop Newcomer. He had just passed his eighty-first year when the messenger came.

## 2. *Andrew Zeller.*

Next to Bishop Newcomer in this conference stood Andrew Zeller, who was first made associate chairman, and then elected bishop. In 1817 he was again elected to this office, after which, on account of his advancing years, he declined a further reëlection, having served six years in all. His conversion is dated at about 1790. In 1806 he came to Ohio, then regarded as the "far west," settling near Germantown, in Montgomery County, about twelve miles from Dayton. In 1810 he was present at the meeting in Ross County where the Miami Conference was organized. He was one of the four representatives from Ohio in the first General Conference. He is described as a preacher of modest abilities, "mild, plain, and evangelical." But to this it is added that "his life was a sermon." His earnest, devout spirit impressed itself deeply upon the minds and hearts of others. As an illustration of this Mr. Spayth relates that while he was on an official tour, in 1815, he had occasion to stop in a place to have a small piece of work done. The mechanic was a worthy man, but declined to attend church, or hear the gospel preached. As he was proceeding with his work,



he cast a casual glance toward Bishop Zeller, who stood at a little distance with his hands folded. He was impressed by the appearance of the bishop, and could not resist a second and third look. Soon afterward a deep conviction of sin seized upon him, and he found no rest until he found it in Christ. Through this incident, graciously used by the Holy Spirit, he and his household became devout believers.

Bishop Zeller's influence in the early days of the Miami Conference told strongly for its welfare. A number of its earlier sessions were held in his hospitable home, and a session was in progress in Germantown at the time of his decease. He was then in the eighty-fourth year of his age, and when some of the brethren who visited him inquired of him if he thought the end was nigh, he replied, brightening up, "I hope so." In speaking of him Mr. Spayth says: "What a contrast between what men call great preachers and what God approves. One hears the echo of applause; the other is followed by a train of happy souls bound to meet in heaven. We now see through a glass darkly; fleeting visions pass before and around us which will prove happy realities when the veil shall be lifted, and we shall see the saints, who are the joy and diadem of the true minister, reflecting the light of Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Lawrence, in writing of Bishop Zeller, says: "As he appeared at fourscore, he is described as a little above the medium height, and remarkably straight; hair white, and, on the top of his head, thin; eyes gray and full, and skin very fair. To the last year of his life he walked perfectly erect, and with a quick and measured step."<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Zeller's death occurred on May 25, 1839. His

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., pp. 75, 76.

remains were laid to rest on an elevated spot of land, near Germantown, to await the final summons to the resurrection of the just.

### 3. *Henry Kumler, Sen.*

Henry Kumler, Sen., was of Swiss parentage, his father having been born in Switzerland. The family, on arriving in America, seems to have settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Henry was born on January 3, 1775. His parents being members of the Reformed Church, he was brought up in that church. About the year 1810 he removed to a farm near Greencastle, where his conversion occurred. In a brief sketch of his life<sup>1</sup> he tells of the protracted struggle he had before he finally found the light. In 1813 he united with the Eastern Conference, and was licensed to preach. The session was held at Hagerstown, Maryland. The following year the conference convened at his house, and after this he frequently accompanied Henry G. Spayth, Abraham Mayer, and others on preaching tours. When the delegates for the first General Conference were elected, he was among the number chosen. Four years later, in 1819, he removed to Ohio, settling on a fertile farm, near Trenton, in Butler County. His residence remained here until death closed his career. In 1825 he was elected to the office of bishop, in which relation he served for five consecutive terms, a period of twenty years. Having reached the age of seventy-one, and being no longer able to perform the long horseback journeys required in those days, he was released from further continuance in that form of toil.

He was the father of a large family, seven sons and five daughters. His oldest sons, Henry and Daniel C., became ministers, Henry becoming also a bishop. Ex-Bishop D. K. Flickinger is a grandson of the first Bishop

<sup>1</sup> *Unity Magazine*, Vol. I., p. 161.

Kumler. A number of others of his descendants have risen to positions of distinction in civil and religious life.

Bishop Kumler was an earnest preacher, soulful, tender, and effective. Socially, he was cheerful and agreeable, his conversation frequently abounding in pleasantries, a characteristic which has been strongly transmitted to his now very numerous family. With his general conversation he was accustomed to mingle earnest spiritual counsel. He preached throughout his life only in the German language, a few attempts at the English satisfying him that his ministry was not to find expression in that tongue. He was noted for his abounding generosity. It was not an unusual thing for him to entertain an entire conference at his house. He died on January 8, 1854, having just entered his eightieth year. His influence, with that of his family, contributed largely toward building up the United Brethren Church in southwestern Ohio.

#### 4. *Other Laborers.*

Daniel Troyer was another of the earlier pioneers of the Church. He was born in 1769, in Maryland. When a young man he was on an occasion an interested listener to Mr. Newcomer. He next attended a sacramental meeting at Antietam. Bishop Otterbein preached the sermon and conducted the service. At the close he invited all who desired the prayers of God's people to come forward and give him their hands. Many responded, weeping, among them Mr. Troyer, his joyful conversion following soon after. In 1806 he removed west, settling in the Miami Valley, Ohio. He was present at the organization of the Miami Conference in 1810, becoming one of its members. In 1812 he went into the active itinerant service. "As a preacher," wrote Rev. George Bonebrake, "he was, in his earlier years, a man of power. He had a

very strong voice, and great zeal; and at large meetings, when it became necessary to divide the congregation, the people would generally ask, 'Where will Brother Troyer preach?' and on such occasions he always had his full share of the hearers."<sup>1</sup> Prof. Henry Garst, D.D., of Otterbein University, who was born and brought up near the home of Mr. Troyer, remembers him distinctly as he appeared in his old age. He describes him as short and heavy-set in person, with round face and kindly expression. Mr. Troyer lived to the great age of ninety-four years, dying in 1863. Dr. Garst says that "when the weight of years no longer permitted him to go to the house of worship, he requested that the class of which he was a member meet regularly at his home in Germantown." Dr. Garst, as a boy, "often attended these meetings, and vividly remembers how he used to be stirred by the words of instruction, warning, and encouragement Father Troyer, sitting in his great arm-chair, would utter."<sup>2</sup>

Christian Berger became a member of the original conference as early as 1802. Mr. Spayth says that "his preaching commenced in Washington County, Pennsylvania, where the fruit of his preaching Christ, to use a figure, still waves in succession like a handful of corn on the top of the mountain. His voice was as one crying in the wilderness. . . . Indefatigable in his preaching, he was one of those brethren who endured much for the gospel, in weariness, painfulness, and watchings, a man tried in the fire. His hire was the salvation of souls. The great day will present his great reward."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Spayth further described him as a man of most devout spirit, earnest, laborious, always in deep poverty, yet always cheerfully toiling. He was among the earliest of the

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., pp., 90, 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Pioneer Address*, by Dr. Henry Garst, before the Miami Conference, 1896.

<sup>3</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 188.



United Brethren ministers in western Pennsylvania, in Westmoreland and other counties, and in northeastern Ohio. His conversion occurred in a barn on the farm of a Mr. Dundore, in Berks County, Pennsylvania, the type of church-house in so common use in those earlier days, and in which so many souls were brought to the Saviour, who once was cradled in a manger. A meeting having been appointed, he hid himself in the loft to observe what would transpire below. As the meeting grew warm, the people were startled by loud cries and prayers from above. He was presently brought down, and ere long rejoiced in the new-found salvation. His ministerial career began soon afterward. His name appears again as a member of the General Conference of 1825.

The name of Jacob Baulus is among those which appear the most frequently in the early church records, many allusions to him occurring in *Newcomer's Journal*. He was one of the most efficient of the preachers of Maryland. In 1822 he removed west, settling near Fremont, Ohio. Mr. Lawrence, in speaking of him, says: "His home was located in the deep, dark forests of the Black Swamp. Wild game and wild men abounded. He was the first evangelical minister in that section of the country; and he not only preached to the new settlers whenever opportunity was offered, but he opened his house and spread his table for evangelical ministers of all denominations."<sup>1</sup> By his early advent and labors in that part of the State of Ohio he became the father of the Sandusky Conference. The sturdy character of the men who gathered about him, as of those who have followed in their steps, indicates how wisely and efficiently he laid the foundations of the Church in that region. That part of the State

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., p. 299.

was originally included in the territory set off for the Muskingum Conference.

George Benedum, one of the Ohio delegates in the General Conference of 1815, was among the early fruits of the revival in Pennsylvania. He became a minister among the United Brethren in 1794, being then in the twenty-ninth year of his age. In the year 1804 his name appeared for the last time as present at a session of the old conference, and his removal to Ohio must have occurred not long afterward. "It is certain," says Mr. Lawrence, "that he was one of the first United Brethren evangelists in Ohio. Immediately after his settlement in the Scioto Valley he lifted up the standard of the cross, around which many of the early settlers were persuaded to rally."<sup>1</sup> Many precious fruits followed his preaching. Among his converts were some who afterward became well-known ministers in the Church, as Dewalt Meehlin, a man of many labors and precious memory, Lewis Kramer, John Smaltz, and Bishop Samuel Hiestand. Mr. Benedum was present at the organization of the Miami Conference, and became one of its original members.

Bishop Russel, in a sketch written for Mr. Lawrence, describes Mr. Benedum as a man of high-class natural endowments, with accurate judgment and fertile imagination, and as a close student of the Scriptures, from which his sermons were enriched to an unusual degree. He preached wholly in the German language, and in the use of that tongue is said to have been a master. Bishop Edwards once said of him that "although he could not understand a sentence of the German language, yet he always became happy under his preaching." He traveled extensively, preached much, and gathered full harvests into the Master's garner, receiving of earthly compensation

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., p. 71.

but slight measure, but of the eternal in great abundance. He died on March 27, 1837, in the seventy-second year of his age, after having given forty-three years to the gospel ministry.

Christian Crum, a member from Virginia in the first General Conference, was one of twin brothers, both ministers, and both achieving an honorable record in the early work of the Church. His brother's name was Henry. They were brought up in the German Reformed Church, and preached in the German language. Christian, who became the more prominent of the two, is frequently mentioned in *Newcomer's Journal*. He was a man of recognized abilities and large usefulness. His death occurred in 1823.

Abraham Mayer, whose name appears in the honored list of members of this first General Conference, joined the United Brethren Church, and soon afterward its ministry, about the year 1796. He was of Mennonite extraction, and continued to wear the dress of that people. He is described by Mr. Spayth as a man "of prepossessing appearance," and "in heart and life an Israelite indeed." He possessed fine gifts as a thinker and speaker. His home, not far from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, became a regular preaching place. At the first meeting held there, in May, 1798, Boehm, Newcomer, Draksel, and Pfrimmer were present. While not a regular itinerant, he preached much, often making long tours to meet appointments which had been made for him. Mr. Spayth relates that on one such occasion, in 1813, the first appointment in a series being forty-five miles distant, he rode to within about four or five miles of the place, when he stopped at a farm-house to inquire the way. A lady, coming to the door, gave him the desired information, and then inquired if he was the man who was expected to preach at Mr. K.'s. To his

affirmative answer she replied, "But you do not look like one of our preachers; to what church do you belong?" Mr. Mayer answered, "The United Brethren." She misunderstood the answer, and on her husband's return reported that the minister who was to preach belonged to the *Converted Brethren*. "Converted Brethren!" said he; "who ever heard of such a church?" But the lady proposed that they go and hear him preach. They did so, and the result was their own conviction and most happy conversion, many others in the neighborhood joining with them.

Mr. Mayer was again a member of the General Conference in 1825, and in November of the following year went to his reward. He was in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and had given thirty years to the ministry of Jesus.

The name of Henry G. Spayth is reserved for the last in this connection. He was a delegate from Virginia, and served as one of the secretaries of the conference. Mr. Spayth's name first appears on the roll of members of the Eastern Conference in 1812, the session for that year being held at Antietam. His first work as a minister was rendered in Maryland and Virginia. He removed to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, about the year 1815, probably soon after the session of the General Conference there.

Mr. Spayth was endowed with superior gifts, especially in matters of counsel, and in this first General Conference exerted an important influence. The reader will remember the quotation from his history respecting the contentions which darkened the earlier sessions of the conference, and also that after a season of fervent prayer the clouds were dispersed, and harmony reigned from that hour forward to the end. Mr. Spayth modestly omits to speak



of the part he himself performed in bringing about the restoration of better feeling. Mr. Lawrence mentions that "at the moment when a rupture in that body seemed inevitable, and the powers of darkness were ready to shout a victory, Mr. Spayth arose and delivered an address, which, with the prayer-meeting that followed, resulted in a complete restoration of good feeling and a most happy termination of the difficulties."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Spayth was returned to the General Conference at six subsequent sessions, namely, the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, ninth, and tenth. Possessing great strength of character, as well as sound judgment, he exerted much influence in these successive conferences, and it is remarked of him that "perhaps few men did more to shape the polity of the Church from 1815 to 1845, a period of thirty years."<sup>1</sup>

Soon after his removal to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, Mr. Spayth became a member, after its formation, of the Muskingum Conference, a conference whose star, through change in name, has disappeared from our ecclesiastical horoscope. Later he removed to Tiffin, Ohio, becoming, in 1835, a member of the Sandusky Conference. The chief work of Mr. Spayth's life, that by means of which his memory will be longest preserved, was the writing of the first history of the United Brethren Church.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Spayth died at his home in Tiffin, September 2, 1873.

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 282.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCES OF 1817-1833

#### I. THE SECOND GENERAL CONFERENCE—1817.

THE General Conference of 1815, while making distinct provision for quadrennial assemblies, deemed it wise, as has been seen, that the next succeeding session be held in two instead of four years. This was done apparently on account of some measure of uncertainty as to how the things done at the first session would be received by the Church. The second conference may therefore be regarded as in some sense an adjourned session of the first, while in fact it was a distinct conference, composed of delegates chosen by another election.

The second General Conference, when it convened, happily found an entirely clear sky. The proceedings of the first conference had received the most cordial approval, first at the Miami Conference, which convened on June 27, 1815, only a few weeks after the General Conference, and soon afterward at the conference of the East. This conference, therefore, had before it no embarrassing task of revising the acts of the first, but, on the other hand, addressed itself to the more pleasant labor of providing some valuable additional features to the Rules of Discipline. These related in part to visitations from house to house and the enforcement of a practical Christianity, and to the instruction of youth in the gospel of Christ. They provided also a completed form for the ordination of ministers, another for the ordination of bishops, and an excellent marriage ceremony.

The place of meeting of the General Conference was again at Mount Pleasant, in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; the time June 2, 1817. Of the delegates elected only twelve assembled, namely, Christian Newcomer and Andrew Zeller, bishops; Abraham Mayer, Joseph Hoffman, John Snyder, Henry Kumler, Sen., Jacob Dehoff, L. Kramer, Dewalt Mechlin, Henry G. Spayth, L. Roth, and H. Ow. Mr. Spayth was again secretary, and Bishops Newcomer and Zeller were reëlected for the succeeding term of four years. A new conference was formed, the Muskingum, including that portion of Ohio which lies east and north of the Muskingum River, with Washington and Westmoreland counties in Pennsylvania. One cannot help a feeling of regret that in the processes of rearrangement of territorial boundaries this historic conference, the third in the order of organization, and which gave to the Church some of its foremost men, has disappeared from the list of conference organizations.

The business of this General Conference, as of its predecessor, and of a number of those coming after, was transacted in the German language. The minutes were recorded in German, but the conference directed that a translation of the revised Discipline should be made into English, and a hundred copies be printed in that tongue. So modest were the proportions of the English part of the Church at that time that one hundred copies were deemed sufficient to meet every requirement.

The spirit in which the action of the General Conference relative to the ordination of ministers was received by the Church was well illustrated in the Miami Conference at the session next succeeding. By a unanimous vote of the conference the following names were presented as candidates for ordination by the laying on of hands: Christian

Crum, A. Hiestand, George Benedum, Andrew Zeller, Daniel Troyer, H. Miller, W. P. Smith, and J. G. Pfrimmer. That nothing might be wanting in the observance of form as set forth in the New Testament, and now recognized by the highest authority in the Church, these men were, on the last day of the session, solemnly ordained to the office of elders in the Church, according to the formulas prescribed in the Discipline. First in the order, Bishop Newcomer, who himself had been ordained by Bishop Otterbein, laid his hands on the head of Christian Crum, and afterward proceeded, with the aid of Mr. Crum, to ordain the rest in like manner. Among them were men who had grown venerable in the office of the ministry, and one bishop. Mr. Newcomer himself had filled the office of bishop before his ordination by Bishop Otterbein.

## II. THE THIRD GENERAL CONFERENCE—1821.

The General Conference of 1821, the third in the series, was held in Fairfield County, Ohio, at the home of Dewalt Mechlin, a local preacher of the Miami Conference. The time of assembling was May 15. The territory of the Church had again been divided into districts, as at the first, this time eight in number. Twenty-two delegates were elected, and seventeen were in attendance, as follows :

*Maryland District*—Samuel Huber, William Brown.

*Carlisle*—Michael Baer.

*Virginia*—George Guething, Daniel Pfeifer.

*Miami*—Henry Joseph Frey, Henry Evinger, Henry Kumler, Sen., Abraham Bonsler.

*Muskingum*—Michael Bortsfeld, A. Forney.

*New Lancaster*—Lewis Kramer, Nathaniel Havens.

*Lower Lancaster*—George Benedum, Joseph Hoffman.

*Indiana*—John McNamar, John George Pfrimmer.

Bishops Newcomer and Zeller presided.



*Rule on Slavery Adopted.*

The conference, during the several days of its continuance, considered a variety of subjects, but no other action was taken which had so decided an influence upon the future character of the Church as that referring to slavery and the liquor traffic. On the subject of slavery strong resolutions were adopted and incorporated in the Discipline as a part of the law of the Church. The resolutions, translated from the German for the English edition of the Discipline, are as follows :

*Resolved*, That all slavery, in every sense of the word, be totally prohibited and in no way tolerated in our community. Should some be found therein, or others apply to be admitted as members, who hold slaves, they can neither remain to be members nor be admitted as such, provided they do not personally manumit or set free such slave, where-ever the laws of the State shall permit it, or submit the case to the quarterly conference, to be by them specified what length of time such slave shall serve his master or other person, until the amount given for him, or for raising him, be compensated to his master. But in no case shall a member of our society be permitted to sell a slave.

*Resolved*, That if any member of this society shall publicly transgress as aforesaid, such member shall likewise be publicly reprimanded, and in case such member shall not humble [himself], the same shall be publicly excluded from the congregation.

The translation may not be said to be expressed in the best English, the German idiom being chiefly preserved, but there is nothing lacking in perspicuity or energy, and no opportunity was left, on account of indefiniteness, for any evasion of its provisions.

The reader who is acquainted with the German language may be pleased to see this interesting law in its clear and strong expression as it was framed by the fathers of that day. The following is the original form :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For another version of this law, both in German and English, see Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., pp. 143-145. The form there given is from a transcript made by J. G. Pfrimmer, who was a member of the General Conference of 1821, and transcribed by Bishop Hiestand into the Journal of the Miami Conference. See pp. 96-103, Miami Conference Journal.

Beschlossen, daß alle Sklaverei, in welchem Verstand es auch immer sein mag, in unserer Gemeinschaft gänzlich verboten sei, und auf keine Weise erlaubt sein kann. Sollten sich in unserer Gemeinschaft einige befinden, oder andere sich melden als Mitglieder angenommen zu werden, welche Sklaven haben, so können solche weder Glieder bleiben noch angenommen werden. Es sei denn, daß sie solche Sklaven selbst frei setzen, wo die Gesetze des Staates es erlauben oder es der vierteljährlichen Konferenz überlassen zu bestimmen, wie lange ein solcher Sklave entweder seinem Meister oder einem andern dienen soll, bis sein Meister für die Kosten des Ankaufs oder der Erziehung Vergeltung erhalten hat. Aber niemals ist es einem Glied unserer Gemeinschaft erlaubt einen Sklaven zu verkaufen.

Beschlossen, daß wenn sich ein Gemeindeglied öffentlich so vergehet, so soll ihm auch öffentlich Verweis gegeben werden; und wenn es sich nicht demütiget, soll es öffentlich aus der Gemeinde ausgeschlossen werden.

Thus at this early day, forty years before the breaking out of the great war for the perpetuation of slavery, these fathers of the Church raised this firm protest against the great iniquity. The institution was at that time rapidly rising toward that ascendancy by which it afterward exerted so vast a power in corrupting the political and religious conscience, and dominating the legislation of the country. The rule thus adopted, while working seeming hardship in many cases, was rigidly adhered to by the Church. But a necessary result was, that while the Church was already well established in Maryland and Virginia, its growth in other States of the South was either greatly retarded or wholly prevented. But the rule gave the Church a high moral vantage ground in maintaining an attitude of protest against the great national sin, and when the final struggle came its people on both sides of the line were found solid in the cause of freedom and the support of the Government.

### *Legislation on Temperance.*

On another subject of great national concern the voice of this General Conference was heard, namely, that of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. The time

dates back to a period when the drink habit was almost universal, and when honored members of churches not only personally used intoxicating liquors freely, but also manufactured them or sold them to others.

The earliest expression of the Church on this subject was made by the Eastern Conference, as found in the Discipline of 1814:

ARTICLE 11. Every member shall abstain from strong drink, and use it only on necessity as medicine.

Familiar as we are at the present time with temperance legislation of the most decided character, this utterance, dating back to as early a time as 1814, with the social conditions then prevailing inside as well as outside of the churches, must be regarded as quite extraordinary. The provision is not repeated in the Disciplines for some years afterward, but the end aimed at reappears in the resolution of 1821 and in subsequent legislation. In 1833 the legislation took a strong prohibitive form, applying, however, at first only to the ministerial class. In 1841 it took a broader form.

The resolution adopted by the General Conference of 1821, which, however, was not then embodied in the Discipline, reads as follows:

*Resolved*, That neither preacher nor lay member shall be allowed to carry on a distillery; and that distillers be requested to willingly cease the business; that the members of the General Conference be requested to lay this resolution before the several annual conferences; that it shall then be the duty of the preachers to labor against the evils of intemperance during the interval between this and the next General Conference, when the subject shall again be taken up for further consideration.

On this action Mr. Lawrence, in his History of the United Brethren Church, remarks: "If we may make a single exception, this is the earliest ecclesiastical action on record which was aimed at the suppression of the

liquor traffic.<sup>1</sup> The earliest action which has come under our notice was taken by the General Association of Massachusetts Proper, in 1811, at which time a committee, of which Rev. Dr. Worcester was chairman, was appointed to draft the constitution of a society whose object should be to check the progress of intemperance, viewed by the association as a growing evil. It was not, however, until 1813 that the contemplated society was organized and held a meeting. Associated with this movement were some of the most eminent men of New England, such as Hon. Samuel Dexter and Hon. Nathan Dane. . . . It exerted no considerable influence outside of the New England States, and it was not until after the organization of the American Temperance Society, in 1826, that the evangelical Christian denominations entered into the movement. This was five years after the United Brethren General Conference, composed mainly of German preachers, had committed the United Brethren ministry in particular, and the United Brethren Church in general, to a decisively aggressive movement against intemperance."<sup>2</sup>

Thus this early action by the General Conference gave to the United Brethren Church, with reference to the temperance movement, a most honorable position, which in all its later legislation and history it has worthily maintained. Many interesting instances occurred in which men, in view of the action of the General Conference on this subject, put away their distilleries or ceased to handle the forbidden beverage. Ex-Bishop Hanby, in Spayth's history of the Church, relates that in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, about the year 1835, a man named Abraham Herr was converted during a revival in his neighborhood. He was a man of wealth, owning several farms and a

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lawrence apparently was unacquainted with the provision in the Discipline of 1814.

<sup>2</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., pp. 148, 149.



large distillery. Becoming awakened to the sin and evil of the manufacture of and traffic in intoxicating liquors, he removed the machinery from his distillery, remodeled it, and converted it into a house of worship. On the very spot where the kettles stood he erected a pulpit, so that thenceforth, instead of the fiery liquids for the destruction of men's bodies and souls, there issued forth the fountains of life.<sup>1</sup>

In the subsequent legislation of the Church the rule was made equally prohibitive as to the use of ardent spirits as a beverage, so that the denomination became in effect a total abstinence society.

Christian Newcomer and Joseph Hoffman were elected bishops by this conference, Bishop Newcomer having served from his first election in 1813.

### III. THE FOURTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1825.

The General Conference of 1825 convened at Jacob Shaup's, in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, on May 7. Bishops Newcomer and Hoffman presided. There were in attendance twenty-four members. Among these were six who had sat in the General Conference of 1815, namely, Christian Newcomer, Henry Kumler, Sen., Henry G. Spayth, Abraham Mayer, Christian Berger, and Andrew Zeller. John Hildt, a close associate of Bishop Otterbein, and the translator of Newcomer's *Journal*, occupied a seat in this conference. Ex-Bishop Andrew Zeller was a member. Others who were soon to fill a large place in the active service of the Church, as Samuel Hiestand, Jacob Antrim, Nathaniel Havens, and William Stewart, were also members.

At this conference action was taken improving the questions for examination of candidates for the ministry, providing for compensation for bishops, and annulling the

<sup>1</sup> Spayth's *History*, p. 242.

ritual for the ordination of bishops at induction into office. The bishops hitherto had performed all their service without pecuniary consideration. As long journeys between the eastern and western portions of the Church were required in attending the conferences, besides a great amount of travel in visiting local neighborhoods and churches, the labor was often very burdensome. The rules required that a bishop from the East sit with a bishop of the West in holding a conference, and that a bishop residing in the West assist a bishop residing in the East in like manner. In these travels, as we have seen, Bishop Newcomer spent the larger part of his life in the saddle. Horseback travel was the only method then available to the itinerant. But now that compensation was provided for, there was no danger that any would covet the office for the sake of the gains in prospect. The salary of a bishop was fixed, if married, at one hundred and sixty dollars a year, if single, at eighty, the same as that of the itinerant preacher.

Christian Newcomer and Henry Kumler, Sen., were elected bishops. The following action was then taken touching the ordination of bishops:

*Resolved*, That as the newly elected bishop has already been ordained by the imposition of hands as an elder in the Church, a second ordination is not deemed essential to the duties of a bishop; nor do we find a Scripture precedent for a second or third ordination.

This abrogation of a measure adopted by the General Conference of 1815 for the ordination of bishops was timely, and in harmony with the simple ecclesiastical system of the Church, as well as with the New Testament, or apostolic, practice. The United Brethren Church thus recognized but a single order in its ministry, its bishops, though honored with high responsibility, being of the same class as their brethren in the ranks.

Bishop Kumler, who served so long and honorably in the bishop's office, a period of twenty-four years, has already been spoken of at some length in these pages.

The separate organization of the Scioto Annual Conference was authorized by this General Conference, making the fourth annual conference.

#### IV. THE FIFTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1829.

The fifth General Conference, that of 1829, was held at Dewalt Mechlin's, in Fairfield County, Ohio, commencing on May 15. Twenty-eight delegates, with two bishops, thirty members in all, were in attendance. The conferences represented were the Hagerstown, or Eastern, Miami, Muskingum, and Scioto. The bishops were Christian Newcomer and Henry Kumler, Sen.

A special interest attaches to this conference from the fact that it was the last which the venerable Bishop Newcomer attended. He was now in his eighty-first year, but such was the stalwart character of the man that he once more undertook the long horseback journey from his home in the East to meet his official obligations as a bishop over the Lord's house. On April 10 he closed the session of the Eastern Conference; on the 11th he bade farewell to his son Andrew's family, with whom he had resided since the death of his wife; on the 28th he met the Muskingum Conference, presiding over its annual session; on May 11 he met the Scioto Conference, presiding over that body, and on the 15th was ready for duty at the session of the General Conference. With Bishop Kumler he was again elected superintendent, but before quite another year had passed the Lord of the harvest, who calls the laborers to receive their dues, had called him to the eternal reward.

Among the names appearing here for the first time in

the General Conference annals are those of John Russel, William Brown, John Coons, and Jacob Erb, all of whom were at subsequent sessions chosen to the office of bishop.

The division of the original conference of the East was authorized by this General Conference, the northern portion being called the Harrisburg Conference, afterward the Pennsylvania, and the southern portion the Hagerstown Conference, afterward the Virginia. The Miami Conference was to yield again a portion of her territory, and the Indiana Conference was formed.

#### V. THE SIXTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1833.

The General Conference of 1833 proved to be a session of great importance to the Church on account of several measures adopted by it. The conference was held at George Dresbach's, in Pickaway County, Ohio, commencing on May 14. Bishop Henry Kumler, Sen., presided, and thirty-three delegates, representing six conferences, were present. The conferences were the Pennsylvania, the Virginia, the Muskingum, the Scioto, the Miami, and the Indiana. Henry G. Spayth, of the Muskingum, and William R. Rhinehart, then of the Virginia Conference, were elected secretaries.

At this session the powers and limitations of the General Conference were discussed and more clearly defined. The subject of representation was considered, much interest being elicited in the discussion. The old plan of representation by districts was discontinued, and it was decided that each annual conference should be entitled to two delegates. The change effected by this arrangement was quite considerable. In this conference, for example, the Pennsylvania Conference had six delegates on the floor, the Scioto eight, the Miami seven, and the Indiana six. Under the new arrangement each of these conferences



would be entitled to but two. This question of representation became one of quite serious moment in subsequent years.

Henry Kumler, Sen., was reëlected, and Samuel Hiestand and William Brown were elected, to the office of bishop. The formation of the Sandusky Conference was authorized by this conference. The term of appointment to the presiding-eldership was reduced from four years to one year. The bishops, however, still retained the appointing power, as arranged by the General Conference of 1815, the annual conference consenting to the appointment. This appointing power remained with the bishops until 1841, when by act of the General Conference it was made the duty of the annual conferences to elect the presiding elders.

This General Conference, as previously referred to, took important action relating to the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. The reader will notice that this legislation was not then made to apply to all the membership of the Church, the immediate purpose being "to purify the house of Levi." The following is the action:

Should any exhorter, preacher, or elder, from and after the next annual conferences in 1834, be engaged in the distillation or vending of ardent spirits, he shall for the first and second offense be accountable to the quarterly or yearly conferences of which he is a member; said conferences will in meekness admonish the offending brother to desist from the distillation or vending of ardent spirits, as the case may be; should these friendly admonitions fail, and the party continue to act in the same, and it be proven to the satisfaction of the yearly conference if a preacher or elder, or before the quarterly conference if an exhorter, such preacher, elder, or exhorter will for the time not be considered a member of this Church.

#### *A Publishing House Founded.*

But by far the most important action taken by this conference, the most far-reaching in its effects upon all the future of the Church, was that relating to the organiza-

tion of a Church printing establishment. It was an early day for the publication of denominational periodicals. Nearly all the great religious and church weeklies, which now fill so large a place in the literature of the world, are of later date. But the men who gathered in this conference foresaw the value of a paper in the progressive development and life of the Church, and they accordingly resolved to begin the publication of such a periodical. A board of trustees was elected, consisting of John Russel, Jonathan Dresbach, and George Dresbach, who were charged with the duty of carrying the will of the General Conference into effect. By resolution the establishment was to be located at Circleville, Ohio. In 1834, in accordance with this action of the General Conference, the trustees secured real estate in Circleville, purchased a press, type, and other necessary material, and established the Publishing House of the Church. The first periodical publication issued from the establishment, and for some years the only one, was the *Religious Telescope*. It appeared December 31, 1834, as a semimonthly, at \$1.50 a year, with William R. Rhinehart as editor. Of this and the subsequent growth of the publishing department of the Church more is to be said in these pages.

#### VI. PERSONAL NOTES.

##### 1. *Joseph Hoffman.*

Bishop Hoffman was born in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, on March 19, 1780. He was of German parentage, was converted at the age of twenty-one, entered the ministry at twenty-two, and the itinerant ranks the year following. In 1814, after the death of Otterbein, he was appointed to the pulpit of the Otterbein Church, remaining for three years. In 1818 he removed to Fairfield

County, Ohio, and later to Montgomery County, settling on a farm overlooking Dayton, now included in the city. Bishop Hoffman, though filling that office for but a single quadrennium, was a man of rare power in the pulpit. In person he was tall and straight, with an impressive face and commanding appearance. His voice possessed unusual power—deep-toned, mellow, and rich, with extraordinary strength when occasion called it forth. As an expounder of the Scriptures he held high rank, and his gifts of speech were such as to lay claim to high oratorical power. Mr. Spayth, writing of his earlier itinerant years, says that in him “the itinerant preacher was fully exemplified in labors abundant, even to excess. An originality and inspired power characterized his preaching.” His last visit to a session of the Miami Conference, with which he was connected, is remembered by some of the older members of that body. An address made by him to the ministers, exhorting them to fidelity in the Master’s service, made a profound impression. He was then seventy-five years old, and when he expressed his belief that he was in their presence as a conference for the last time many hearts were touched. His premonitions proved to be correct. Before the conference assembled again, he had joined the hosts triumphant. His death occurred at Euphemia, Ohio, where the closing years of his life were spent. Bishop Hoffman preached with equal fluency in the English and German languages.

## 2. *Samuel Hiestand.*

The death of Christian Newcomer, in 1830, left Henry Kumler, Sen., to bear the responsibilities of the bishop’s office alone. In 1833 the General Conference reëlected him, and associated with him Samuel Hiestand and William Brown.

Bishop Hiestand was born in Page County, Virginia, March 3, 1781, his parents being members of the Moravian Church. They brought up their children in the fear of God, and three of their sons became ministers, all in the United Brethren Church. Samuel came west at the age of about twenty-three, finding a home in Fairfield County, Ohio. At the age of about thirty-nine, in 1820, he became a member of the Miami Conference, and entered upon the work of the ministry. When the conference was divided and the Scioto was formed, his residence in the Scioto district gave him membership in that conference. He was in attendance at the General Conference of 1821, and was chosen its secretary. He was a member of the General Conferences of 1825 and 1833, and at the latter was chosen one of the bishops of the Church. He was reëlected in 1837, but died on October 9 in the following year, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. As a member of the General Conference of 1837 he had a hand in framing the constitution which was approved by that conference. Bishop Hiestand was a preacher of fair abilities, sometimes rising to great power. He was regarded as a safe counselor, and enjoyed in the highest degree the confidence and esteem of his brethren. His early death was much lamented.

### 3. *William Brown.*

William Brown, also of German descent, was born in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, on July 7, 1796. He was converted at the age of sixteen at a "big meeting" held on Abraham Mayer's farm, near Carlisle, and at the age of twenty was granted license to preach. He entered the itinerant ranks, and gave many years of effective service to the Church. He was much associated with Bishop Newcomer, Guething, Russel, and others of the most active men of that early period. He attained



to much power as a preacher of the word, and at "big meetings" and camp-meetings proved himself one of the most effective of evangelists. He was a delegate from the Pennsylvania Conference to the General Conference of 1833, and was by that conference chosen to the office of bishop, serving in that capacity four years. In 1838 he left his home in the East to establish himself in a new home in Benton County, Indiana. He continued in the itinerant work up to within a year of the close of his life, dying on May 11, 1868, at nearly seventy-two years of age. His early preaching was in the German language, and he continued to make visits to German neighborhoods and to preach to the people in their own language up to a late period in his life. His record is that of a faithful and devoted servant of the Master.

## FIFTH PERIOD—1837–1885

### CHAPTER XV

#### THE GENERAL CONFERENCES OF 1837 AND 1841

##### I. THE SEVENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1837.

THE years 1837 and 1841 mark a pivotal period in the history of the United Brethren Church. The General Conference of 1837 convened on May 9, at Germantown, Montgomery County, Ohio. Bishops Kumler and Hiestand presided, Bishop Brown not being present. Bishop Hiestand preached the opening sermon, which was spoken of at the time as peculiarly appropriate, and was remembered the more from the fact that in the year following he closed his earthly labors. Eight annual conferences were represented, as follows :

*Pennsylvania*—Jacob Erb, Jacob Winter.

*Virginia*—Jacob Rhinehart, J. J. Glossbrenner.

*Muskingum*—Adam Hetzler, David Weimer.

*Sandusky*—John Dorcas, George Hiskey.

*Scioto*—John Coons, William Hanby.

*Miami*—J. Fetterhoff, William Stubbs.

*Indiana*—F. Whitcom, John Lopp.

*Wabash*—F. Kenoyer, William Davis.

Among the measures adopted by the General Conference of 1837 was a "constitution for the better government of the Printing Establishment," the basis of the constitution of the House still found in the Discipline. John Russel, George Dresbach, and Jonathan Dresbach were reëlected trustees for the establishment; William R. Rhinehart was

elected editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and William Hanby publishing agent.

Henry Kumler, Sen., and Samuel Hiestand were reëlected bishops, and Jacob Erb was elected to succeed Bishop Brown, the latter having served four years.

*Adoption of a Constitution.*

The chief interest of the conference centered in the question of the adoption of a constitution for the Church. The draft of such an instrument had been prepared by William R. Rhinehart, and was by him submitted for consideration. On a motion made by Mr. Hanby it was

*Resolved*, That a constitution for the better regulation of the Church be adopted.

The way being thus prepared, Mr. Rhinehart's paper was taken up, considered item by item, and then unanimously adopted. The Constitution embraced throughout such principles as had been before recognized in the government of the Church. The purpose in embodying these in a constitution was to give them the character of fundamental law, and to make any modification difficult. The provision, however, which was intended to so protect its several features against change was not a strong one, only a two-thirds vote of any General Conference being required for the passage of an amendment. In the Constitution afterward adopted in 1841, this was so changed as to make it extremely difficult to secure any amendment, a two-thirds majority vote of the entire Church being required for the ratification of an amendment.

The following is the Constitution adopted in 1837 :

We, as members of the United Brethren in Christ, in order to retain a perfect union, accomplish the ends of justice and equity, insure ecclesiastical as well as domestic tranquillity, provide for the

common interest of the Church, promote the general welfare of society, and to secure the blessings of the gospel to ourselves, our posterity, and our fellow-men in general, do ordain and establish the following Constitution, for the Church aforesaid:

#### ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. All ecclesiastical power herein granted, to make or repeal any rule of discipline, shall be vested in a General Conference, which shall consist of ministers chosen and elected by the members, in every conference district throughout the society. Nevertheless, nothing shall be done so as to change the article of faith or in anywise destroy the itinerant plan.

SEC. 2. No minister shall be considered eligible for election until he has stood in the capacity as elder for the term of three years, having maintained a good moral character during that time. Any elder receiving a transfer from one conference to another shall not be considered eligible for election under a term of two years, and not then without a sufficient recommendation from the conference of which he had been a member.

SEC. 3. The number of delegates from each conference district shall not exceed one for every five hundred members. But should it so happen that a conference would be formed in a territory not having five hundred members within its district, that conference shall nevertheless have one delegate to represent its members in General Conference.

SEC. 4. If any vacancies should occur through sickness or otherwise, after the election of delegates, it shall be the duty of the presiding elder or elders immediately to notify the next highest on the list of votes that he is now a member to represent that district in the ensuing General Conference.

SEC. 5. The bishops shall upon all occasions be considered members of the General Conference, to preside as the organs of that body as in annual conferences. Bishops shall be elected every four years, during the sitting of the General Conference, by the members of that body, from among the elders throughout the Church who may have stood in the capacity for a term not less than six years.

SEC. 6. The General Conference shall be held once every four years; at the adjournment of which it shall be the duty of the same to publish or cause to be published (excepting such parts as may not be considered expedient) all their proceedings, for the benefit of society in general.

#### ARTICLE II.

SECTION 1. The members in each conference district shall solely



have the privilege of choosing and electing the delegates for General Conference, which shall invariably be done at least three months previous to the sitting of the same.

SEC. 2. In the election of delegates for General Conference, it shall be the duty of each annual conference to appoint a committee of three, in their several conference districts, to receive and count the votes, and immediately apprise those who may have been elected.

SEC. 3. It shall also be the duty of the annual conference to furnish the presiding elders with a list of all the elders eligible for election. The presiding elders shall furnish each circuit preacher in charge, whose duty it shall be to furnish each class-leader or steward throughout the circuit with a copy of the same.

SEC. 4. It shall be the duty of each class-leader or steward to appoint a meeting of the members of each class, for the purpose of electing, by ballot or otherwise, one or more delegates to represent them in General Conference.

SEC. 5. It shall also be the duty of each class-leader or steward to sign, enclose, and seal each bill of election, hand it over to the preacher in charge; he again to the presiding elder, whose duty it shall be to transmit the same to the committee appointed by the annual conference.

SEC. 6. The committee appointed to receive and count the votes shall make a list of all the persons voted for and the number of votes for each. Should any two or more of the candidates have an equal number of votes, the individuals thus appointed shall determine by lot who or which of them are elected. They shall also forward the names of those elected to the conference printing establishment for publication.

#### ARTICLE III.

SECTION 1. Each annual conference shall come fully under the jurisdiction of the General Conference, except under such regulations as the General Conference may deem expedient in relation to local matters, so as not to prove prejudicial to the interest of the whole society.

SEC. 2. The business of each annual conference shall strictly be done according to Discipline.

SEC. 3. Any annual conference acting in violation of the doings of General Conference shall, by impeachment, be tried by the same.

SEC. 4. No annual conference shall have the exclusive right to form or admit any new conference within the bounds of society, without the consent of the General Conference.

SEC. 5. All officers, whether bishops, presiding elders, etc., shall,

on impeachment, be dealt with according to Discipline, as other members, expelled or retained, as the case may require.

#### ARTICLE IV.

SECTION 1. If at any time after the passing of this Constitution it should be contemplated either to alter or amend the same, it shall be the privilege of any member in society to publish or cause to be published such contemplation at least three months before the election of delegates to the General Conference.

SEC. 2. No General Conference shall have the power to alter or amend the foregoing Constitution, except it be by a vote of two-thirds of that body.

#### RESOLUTIONS.

Inasmuch as it is the indefeasible right of every man to think and act for himself in matters of faith and morality, this right not only being granted by the charter of his creation, but also by the Discipline adopted for the better government of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ; be it resolved, therefore,

1. That no rule be adopted by General Conference so as to infringe upon the rights of any, as it relates to the mode and manner of baptism, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or the washing of feet, etc.

2. *Resolved*, No rule or ordinance shall be passed in General Conference so as to deprive the local preachers of the eligibility of election as delegates to the same; nor yet to deprive them of their legal vote in the annual conferences to which they severally belong.

3. *Resolved*, That the foregoing resolutions shall neither be altered or appealed without the unanimous consent of the whole conference.

Done in General Conference by the unanimous consent of that body, this 11th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our names.

HENRY KUMLER,	} <i>Bishops.</i>	GEORGE HISKEY.
SAMUEL HIESTAND,		JOHN COONS.
JACOB ERB.		WILLIAM HANBY.
JACOB WINTER.		JOHN FETTERHOFF.
JACOB RHINEHART.		WILLIAM STUBBS.
JACOB J. GLOSSBRENNER.		FRANCIS WHITCOM.
ADAM HETZLER.		JOHN LOPP.
DAVID WEIMER.		FREDERICK KENOYER.
JOHN DORCAS.		WILLIAM DAVIS.

The General Conference, in adopting this Constitution, had some doubts as to its power to limit the prerogatives of future General Conferences, as is done in Article IV., Section 2. It was therefore deemed wise to address a circular letter to the Church at large, giving notice that a memorial would be presented to the next General Conference praying for the ratification of this Constitution, or particularly of the restriction contained in the article and section referred to. The letter is as follows:

*To the Members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ throughout these United States:*

Dear brethren, by whose authority we, as a General Conference, have been authorized to legislate on matters pertaining to the government of our Church, and having long since been convinced of the great necessity of a constitution for the better regulation thereof, have, by unanimous consent, framed and established the foregoing. We are well aware that we have transcended the bounds given us by our Discipline, which [transcending of bounds] will be found in the Constitution, Article IV., Section 2, declaring that the said Constitution can neither be altered or amended without a majority of two-thirds of a General Conference. If there had been a general notice given to the Church previous to the election of delegates, that there would be a memorial offered to General Conference, praying them to adopt a constitution, and to ratify it agreeably to Article IV., Section 2, then the General Conference would have had full power to have done so. The object of this circular is (feeling that the government of our Church is not as firm as it ought to be) to give notice to our Church throughout the Union that we intend to present a memorial to the next General Conference, praying them to ratify the Constitution now adopted, according to [making it binding under] Article IV., Section 2, in testimony of our ardent desire for the welfare of our Church, and the general spread of the gospel.

Written by order of General Conference, Germantown, Ohio, May 12, 1837.

Signed in behalf of the same by

WILLIAM R. RHINEHART, *Secretary*.

The terms of this Constitution did not require its submission to the Church for approval by a popular vote. It was the purpose of this letter, however, to bring it to the

consideration of the people, so that in voting for delegates to the next General Conference they might choose their delegates with reference to further contemplated action on the Constitution.

The reader will at once be struck with the somewhat ambiguous or doubtful character of some portions of this circular. The impression upon first reading will generally be that the General Conference entertained doubts as to its power to adopt a constitution. A second reading will lead to the conclusion that the feeling of doubt did not apply to the Constitution as a whole, but to that particular feature which proposed to limit the powers of future General Conferences.

It will be of interest here to reproduce the comment of Ex-Bishop Hanby, editor of the *Religious Telescope* in 1839. In an editorial in that year, two years before the General Conference of 1841, in reply to a question by Rev. William R. Coursey, Mr. Hanby indicates conclusively what the mind of the General Conference of 1837 was as to its powers. Their action was considered as final, except in regard to the article and section as above. The following is what Mr. Hanby, a member of the General Conference of 1837, said :

“Here we must confess that we do not understand Brother Coursey, unless he is of the opinion that the present Constitution is void and of no effect. If so, we think he is mistaken. It was not, by any means, considered that the Constitution would be null and void for four years, and that therefore a petition should be offered to the next General Conference, praying for the enactment of a certain specification, as set forth in the circular of the Discipline. General Conference did by no means doubt their right to gather up the detached principles of government as contained in the Discipline and throw them to-



gether in the form of a constitution, and even make amendments to them, but they did doubt the right of declaring that that Constitution should be neither altered nor amended without a majority of two-thirds of a General Conference, and that was, we think, the only object of the circular, and that is the only specification set forth in the circular. Presuming, then, that the Constitution is equally valid with other parts of the Discipline, we refer Brother Coursey to the second article in the Constitution as exhibiting a satisfactory manner of procedure."

## II. THE EIGHTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1841.

The General Conference of 1841, regarded from the historical standpoint, occupies a place among the most important of the entire series of General Conferences, its special distinction being that of framing and adopting a constitution for the Church which was accepted for a period of nearly a half century. This conference assembled on the 10th of May of that year, at Dresbach's Church, in Pickaway County, Ohio. The conference consisted of twenty-three ministers, including two bishops. The bishops were Henry Kumler, Sen., and Jacob Erb. The delegates and the conferences they represented were as follows:

*Pennsylvania*—John Russel, Jacob Roop.

*Virginia*—J. J. Glossbrenner, W. R. Coursey.

*Allegheny*—J. Ritter, G. Miller.

*Muskingum*—Alexander Biddle, James McGaw.

*Sandusky*—Henry G. Spayth, George Hiskey.

*Scioto*—William Hastings, John Coons, J. Montgomery, E. Vandemark.

*Miami*—Henry Kumler, Jun., Francis Whitcom.

*Indiana*—Henry Bonebrake, Joseph A. Ball, J. G. Eckels.

*Wabash*—Josiah Davis, William Davis.

*A Second Constitution Adopted.*

To what extent the delegates to this General Conference may have regarded themselves as being instructed in respect to the approval of the Constitution as framed in 1837, does not appear. The circular letter which was sent to the Church distinctly contemplated the ratification of this Constitution, under its final article, after due memorials to the General Conference, as appears in the following announcement: "The object of this circular is (feeling that the government of our Church is not as firm as it ought to be) to give notice to our Church throughout the Union that we intend to present a memorial to the next General Conference, praying them to ratify the Constitution now adopted, according to Article IV., Section 2." This provision of the circular seems to have been entirely passed by. The Constitution as framed and unanimously approved by the General Conference of 1837, and, with the accompanying circular, laid before the people, certainly was not *ratified*, as contemplated. There is no evidence that it was even considered. The General Conference, according to the terms of the Constitution and of the circular, had power to do but one of two things, that is, to ratify or reject. Far from this, the conference passed by both the Constitution and the circular and proceeded *de novo* to form a constitution.

In general, the essential features of the instrument of 1837 reappear in that of 1841, in rearranged, condensed, and greatly changed form, while some new features are added. The provision against possible hasty amendment is taken from the General Conference and transferred to the people of the entire Church, requiring, as before, a two-thirds majority to sustain any proposed alteration or amendment. A very important feature, that providing for *pro rata* representation, is entirely eliminated. The

provisions against secret societies and slavery are new matter. The instrument, in its general expression, is a decided improvement upon that of 1837. The just criticism against the attitude of this General Conference lies in its assumption of final authority, as against the declaration of the General Conference of 1837. That conference recognized the principle of submission to the people, who should have a voice through the delegates whom they would elect, either for or against ratification. This conference assumed the authority to declare its work final, without submission to the people, and so provided as to make all future amendment difficult. Nevertheless, this Constitution, so framed and adopted, acquired, by the silent acquiescence of the Church, probably all the validity inherent in fundamental law, and as such remained in full force until, in 1885-89, it was amended by the concurrent action of the General Conference and the Church at large.

The following is the text of the Constitution of 1841 as adopted :

We, the members of the CHURCH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST, in the name of God, do, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, as well as to produce and secure a uniform mode of action, in faith and practice, also to define the powers and the business of quarterly, annual, and general conferences, as recognized by this Church, ordain the following articles of Constitution:

#### ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. All ecclesiastical power herein granted, to make or repeal any rule of discipline, is vested in a General Conference, which shall consist of elders, elected by the members in every conference district throughout the society; provided, however, such elders shall have stood in that capacity three years, in the conference district to which they belong.

SEC. 2. General Conference is to be held every four years; the bishops to be considered members and presiding officers.

SEC. 3. Each annual conference shall place before the society the names of all the elders eligible to membership in the General Conference.

#### ARTICLE II.

SECTION 1. The General Conference shall define the boundaries of the annual conferences.

SEC. 2. The General Conference shall, at every session, elect bishops from among the elders throughout the Church who have stood six years in that capacity.

SEC. 3. The business of each annual conference shall be done strictly according to Discipline; and any annual conference acting contrary thereto shall, by impeachment, be tried by the General Conference.

SEC. 4. No rule or ordinance shall at any time be passed to change or do away the Confession of Faith as it now stands, nor to destroy the itinerant plan.

SEC. 5. There shall no rule be adopted that will infringe upon the rights of any as it relates to the mode of baptism, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or the washing of feet.

SEC. 6. There shall be no rule made that will deprive local preachers of their votes in the annual conferences to which they severally belong.

SEC. 7. There shall be no connection with secret combinations, nor shall involuntary servitude be tolerated in any way.

SEC. 8. The right of appeal shall be inviolate.

#### ARTICLE III.

The right, title, interest, and claim of all property, whether consisting in lots of ground, meeting-houses, legacies, bequests, or donations of any kind, obtained by purchase or otherwise, by any person or persons, for the use, benefit, and behoof of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, is hereby fully recognized and held to be the property of the Church aforesaid.

#### ARTICLE IV.

There shall be no alteration of the foregoing Constitution, unless by request of two-thirds of the whole society.

The voice of the conference in the final adoption of this Constitution is not officially recorded. According to the best authorities, the vote was not unanimous, but the motion to adopt was carried by a large majority.



*The Confession of Faith.*

This General Conference made some slight changes in the Confession of Faith, as other General Conferences had done before. This was in accordance with the principle that the General Conference, as the highest authority then recognized in the Church, possessed final authority on this and all other subjects connected with its system of doctrine or rules of practice. This same conference, however, went a step beyond this and embodied in the Constitution a restrictive clause intended to prohibit all future changes in the Confession of Faith. This prohibition was not strictly observed. Slight amendments of a verbal character were afterward introduced in the Confession of Faith by the General Conference of 1857. For a full view of amendments see the pamphlet by Drs. A. W. Drury and J. P. Landis entitled "The Confession of Faith of the United Brethren in Christ—Its Various Changes."<sup>1</sup>

The following is the Confession of Faith as approved by the General Conference of 1841 :

In the name of God we declare and confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; that these three are one—the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence or being with both; that this triune God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, and furthermore sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man; that he became incarnate by the power of the Holy Ghost in the Virgin Mary, and was born of her; that he is the Saviour and Mediator of the whole human race, if they with full faith in him accept the grace proffered in Jesus; that this Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us, was buried, arose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, to intercede for us; and that he shall come again at the last day, to judge the quick and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Ghost; that he is equal in being with the

<sup>1</sup> See also Appendix I.

Father and the Son, and that he comforts the faithful, and guides them into all truth.

We believe in a holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

We believe that the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the word of God; that it contains the only true way to our salvation; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it with the influence of the Spirit of God as the only rule and guide; and that without faith in Jesus Christ, true repentance, forgiveness of sins, and following after Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

We also believe that what is contained in the Holy Scriptures, to wit, the fall in Adam and redemption through Jesus Christ, shall be preached throughout the world.

We believe that the ordinances, viz., baptism and the remembrance of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be in use, and practiced by all Christian societies; and that it is incumbent on all the children of God particularly to practice them; but the manner in which ought always to be left to the judgment and understanding of every individual. Also the example of washing feet is left to the judgment of every one, to practice or not; but it is not becoming for any of our preachers or members to traduce any of his brethren whose judgment and understanding in this respect are different from his own, either in public or private. Whosoever shall make himself guilty in this respect shall be considered a traducer of his brethren, and shall be answerable for the same.

#### *Other Business.*

In the legislation on temperance an important advance was taken by this conference upon the ordinance of 1833, the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits being prohibited to all the members of the Church. The opening sentence of the section reads, "The distilling and vending of ardent spirits shall hereafter be forbidden throughout our whole society." Druggists and others selling only for medicinal or mechanical purposes were exempted from this prohibition.

This conference elected William Hanby editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and Jonathan Dresbach, George Dresbach, and William Leist trustees of the Printing Establish-

ment. A parent missionary board was also elected, and the conference resolved that a German paper be established at Baltimore, Maryland. The name of the paper was to be *Die Geschäftige Martha* (*Busy Martha*). Jacob Erb was elected editor and financial manager. This was the beginning of the present *Der Fröhliche Botschafter*. Henry Kumler, Sen., and Jacob Erb were reelected bishops, and Henry Kumler, Jun., and John Coons were also chosen to the bishop's office. The conference continued in session ten days, and the meeting is spoken of as having been remarkably harmonious and pleasant. The earlier General Conferences were able to transact their business in brief periods of time. That of 1815, the initial General Conference, sat for five days; those of 1817 and 1825 three days each; and those of 1821 and 1829 each four days.

### III. PERSONAL NOTES.

#### 1. *Jacob Erb.*

Jacob Erb, who succeeded William Brown in the office of bishop, was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on May 25, 1804. His parents on both sides were of Swiss origin, and of Mennonite antecedents. Two brothers of his mother, Christian and Abraham Hershey, were United Brethren ministers. He was converted at the age of sixteen at a meeting in his father's house, a regular preaching place for the United Brethren. At the age of nineteen he became a member of the Hagerstown, or original, Conference, and was sent to work on the Lancaster Circuit, a charge then having thirty appointments, a number which he soon increased to forty. At the age of twenty-one he went as a missionary to western New York and Canada, planting some of the early outposts of the Church. In July, 1830, he baptized in the Susquehanna

River, at Harrisburg, Elder John Winebrenner, the founder of the Church of God, or Winebrennarians, as the followers of Mr. Winebrenner were long called. Mr. Erb and Mr. Winebrenner were close friends, and had frequently been associated together in revival meetings.

In 1829 Mr. Erb, then twenty-five years of age, was elected a delegate to the General Conference, and again in 1833 and 1837. The latter conference elected him to the bishop's office. In this relation he served for two terms, and was again elected in 1849 for another term of four years, making his time of service twelve years in all. From 1841 to 1842 he was editor and publisher of *Die Geschäftige Martha*, published in Baltimore by order of the General Conference. Bishop Erb lived through a long and busy life, dying on April 29, 1883, at almost seventy-nine years of age. Sixty years of his life were given to the ministry of the word, and during all this period he never failed to attend a single session of his conference, except the last, when the feebleness of old age forbade his being present. He did not, however, forget his brethren, but wrote to the conference a letter that was full of the cheer and hopefulness which so strongly characterized his Christian life. "I love to look back," said he, "and see the progress which we as a church have made." Then, referring to some of the special departments of church work, he continued: "I thank God that I have lived to see this day, which presents such grand monuments of substantial growth of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. . . . A kind Heavenly Father granted to me the privilege of attending, in consecutive order, sixty annual sessions of the Pennsylvania Conference. Could I be present with you, this would be my sixty-first. My faith in God is strong, my confidence in his word unshaken, and I know



by personal experience that there is a power in true religion. The future of a blessed life is to me full of hope and promise. God is my refuge and my strength."<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Erb was a man of medium height, possessed a fine face, in which the lineaments of his nationality were well preserved, was a man of habitually cheerful spirit, preached by preference in the German language, and was often emotional, tender, and impressive. Between the duties of a circuit preacher, presiding elder, stationed pastor, and bishop, he passed a busy and useful life, and was laid to rest in an honored grave. Bishop Dickson officiated at the funeral service. His remains sleep in a cemetery near Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania.

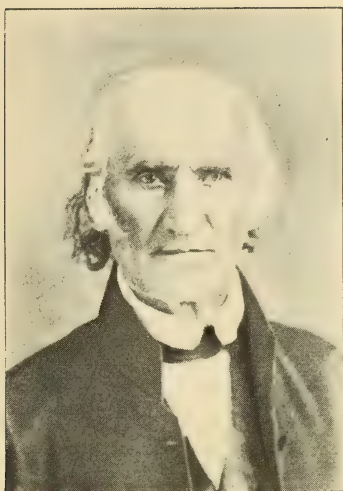
## 2. *Henry Kumler, Jun.*

Henry Kumler, Jun., son of the elder Bishop Henry Kumler, was elected by the General Conference of 1841 to the office of bishop. By his election there was presented the unusual spectacle of a father and son occupying this high office at the same time. He was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on January 9, 1801, and was now just forty years of age, and in the prime of his physical and intellectual vigor. The elder bishop, we have already seen, was of Reformed antecedents; the mother was of the Mennonite Church. The conversion of the father, about the year 1812, led to the entire family's becoming members of the United Brethren Church. Young Henry's conversion occurred when he was about eleven years of age. At fourteen he became leader of a class some three and a half miles from his home. At nineteen he was licensed to preach, his credentials being signed by Bishop Newcomer. To his subsequent great regret he did not for sixteen years enter unreservedly upon the work of the

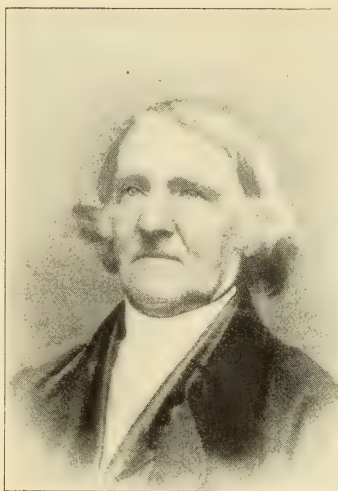
<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. A. Thompson's *Our Bishops*, pp. 237, 238.

ministry, enduring what he afterward called "Egyptian servitude." Breaking away at last from the worldly trammels which hindered him, and giving himself with a complete consecration to the work, he began a career of much usefulness to the Church and of great joy to himself. When he was eighteen years of age, his father with all the family removed west, establishing a new home in Butler County, Ohio. Henry, after his marriage, chose a home near Lewisburg, in Preble County, and here the greater part of his life was spent. He became a member of the Miami Conference, served for many years as presiding elder, and was a number of times sent as a delegate to the General Conference. His earnestness and energy made so favorable an impression upon the General Conference of 1841 that he was by that body chosen as bishop. After one term of service he entered again the itinerant field, to be reëlected in 1857 as bishop of the German conferences. He declined this election, and was again chosen for the same office in 1861. In 1865 the office of bishop of the German work was discontinued.

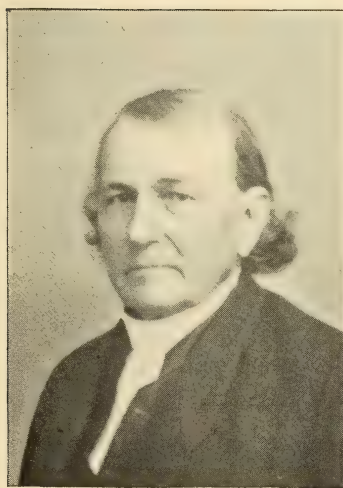
Bishop Kumler was a man of robust physical frame and of impressive personal presence. He was a vigorous thinker, and an earnest defender of any position he espoused. In the annual or General Conference no man was ever more constantly on the alert, not a word spoken by friend or opponent ever escaping his attention. On some questions he was conservative, on others progressive in the best sense. In the prolonged controversies on the secret-society question he was with the radicals, though it may be doubted whether, if he had lived to the time of the radical secession, he would have surrendered his connection with the Church he so long toiled to build up. He was intensely loyal to the Church, and sought unceasingly to build up her interests. Personally, Bishop



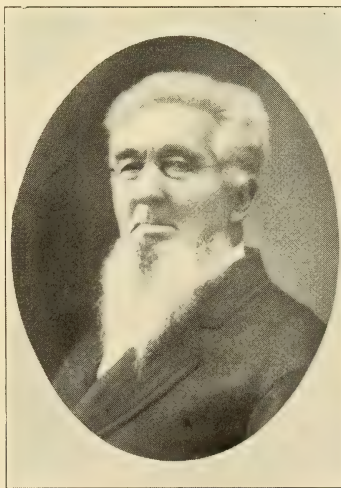
JOSEPH HOFFMAN.



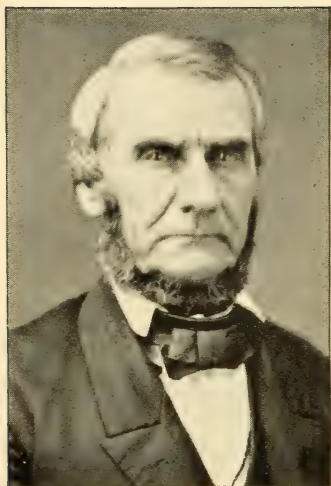
WILLIAM BROWN.



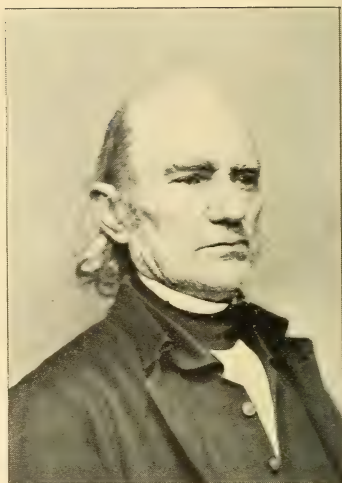
JACOB ERB.



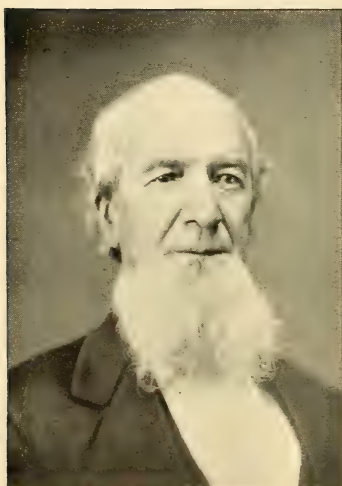
HENRY KUMLER, JUN.



JOHN COONS.



JOHN RUSSEL.



WILLIAM HANBY.



LEWIS DAVIS.



Kumler was of a sunny disposition, fond of pleasantries and humor, qualities which he inherited from his father. As an antagonist in debate, he often struck hard blows, but with so much good humor and genuine kindness of heart that one might deem it quite as agreeable to be opposed to as in agreement with him. In his religious life he was deep, sincere, and earnest. His last years were spent in Dayton, where several of his children live. Among these is Mrs. D. L. Rike, so widely known from her connection with the woman's missionary work, and Mr. S. E. Kumler, who rendered so valuable service recently in the work of relieving Otterbein University from its long embarrassment. Bishop Kumler died August 19, 1882, in the eighty-second year of his age. His remains were laid to rest by the side of his wife and other members of his family in the United Brethren burying-ground at Lewisburg. Rev. C. Schneider, pastor of the German United Brethren church, preached his funeral sermon in Dayton, in German, followed by Bishop Glossbrenner in English. Dr. L. Davis preached a sermon in the church at Lewisburg to the bishop's old neighbors and friends.

### 3. *John Coons.*

In the same year in which the younger Kumler was elected bishop, John Coons was also chosen to that office, so that the episcopal board now stood, Henry Kumler, Sen., Jacob Erb, Henry Kumler, Jun., and John Coons. Mr. Coons was born in Martinsburg, Virginia, on October 25, 1797, and when about ten years of age was brought by his parents to Ross County, Ohio. He was converted at the age of twenty-four under the labors of the noted revivalist Jacob Antrim, of the Miami Conference. He soon began to preach, and in the year following, 1822, was received into membership in the Miami Conference.

He was ordained as an elder in the Church on May 18, 1826, by Bishops Christian Newcomer and Henry Kumler, Sen. On the division of the Miami Conference his residence placed him within the bounds of the Scioto, but on removing in 1845 to the Miami Valley he again became a member of the Miami Conference. He was chosen a delegate from the Scioto Conference to each of the General Conferences from 1829 to 1841, thus being a member of the body which framed and adopted the Constitution of 1837, and again of the conference which formed the Constitution of 1841. In the office of bishop, to which this conference elected him, he served only a single term. Throughout his life he was lacking in robust health, and the hard service required in the bishop's office placed too heavy a strain upon his physical strength. His latest residence after his removal to the Miami Valley was in the city of Dayton, and here his death occurred on August 7, 1869, he being then in the seventy-second year of his age.

Bishop Coons is remembered by many of the older members of the Church as a man of fine personal presence. He was tall, straight in form, dignified in carriage, dark in complexion, with keen, expressive eyes, set under deep, arching eyebrows, and in the pulpit was an elegant figure. He was a man of sound judgment, without the aggressiveness of one born to lead, but his opinions on any important question were sought for and respected. In utterance he was strong, clear, and engaging, so that as a preacher he was everywhere warmly welcomed; in private life he was affable and agreeable, so that among the people whom he visited he was gladly received. A large portion of his service to the Church was rendered in the office of presiding elder. To the living who knew him his name remains as an honored treasure.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCES OF 1845 AND 1849

#### I. EXTENDING THE BOUNDARIES.

THE period from 1841 forward marks a rapid expansion of the Church, especially in the newer regions westward. In all of the conferences, now nine in number, there was much activity, but some of them were reaching out into districts far beyond their original limits. The Wabash Conference, for example, which, at its organization in 1835, embraced all of northern Indiana, was now extending its boundaries until it included all of the State of Illinois, with outposts in Iowa and Wisconsin. Starting with twelve ministers and six charges, it reported in 1842 fifty preachers, thirteen applicants for license, and some twenty circuits and missions. So earnestly was the work pressed forward that in the year 1842 there were reported net gains in membership amounting to two thousand one hundred and forty-four. At the session of the Sandusky Conference for the same year there appeared fifteen applicants for license to preach. The number of ministers in this conference had advanced in ten years from twenty-five to sixty-one. Revival meetings of great power were occurring in many places, and large numbers were being added to the Church. This expansion of the work was largely encouraged by the organization of local or home missionary societies within a number of the annual conferences. These societies were preparing the way for the formation of the central and more far-reaching organiza-

tion, the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society, in 1853. The previous provision of the General Conference for the organization of a general missionary society, already referred to, had proved ineffectual, while the work of local organization continued. These local societies, by providing means for the extension of home and frontier work, proved very efficient in pushing the work into regions where the name of the United Brethren Church had not before been heard of.

Up to this time, and for some years later, no general statistics of the Church were preserved, the neglect growing out of a traditional feeling that Zion should not be numbered. The number of ministers and of circuits or charges was kept. A table prepared by Bishop Hanby from the reports for 1845 shows that in the five years preceding there was an advance from three hundred and eighty-seven ministers to five hundred and eighty-one, an increase of one hundred and ninety-four, and in charges from ninety to one hundred and eighty, the number being just doubled.<sup>1</sup> The lay membership, as estimated by the best authorities, was about thirty thousand.

## II. THE NINTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1845.

The General Conference of 1845 gave attention chiefly to such routine business as comes up at any session, but it also gave proof of a progressive spirit, as will presently be seen. The conference was held at Circleville, Ohio, commencing on May 10. The nine annual conferences were represented by twenty-four delegates. The list of names shows a number of strong men as members of this conference. In addition to the Kumlers, father and son, as bishops, we find the names of Russel, of Pennsylvania, and Glossbrenner and Markwood, of Virginia, all of whom

<sup>1</sup> See Spayth's *History*, p. 289.



became bishops, each giving great distinction to the office. Another member from Virginia was J. Bachtel, one of the most courageous men who ever stood with a small minority in defense of principles in which he believed. From Muskingum Conference was Alexander Biddle, the only surviving member of this General Conference, as also of the historic conference of 1841. From Scioto were E. Vandemark and Joshua Montgomery; from Miami, George Bonebrake; from Indiana, Henry Bonebrake. All of these men were accounted as "giants in those days," and some of them for many years afterward.

This conference has the distinction of being the first to lead in the encouragement of education in the Church. A resolution was adopted, providing that suitable measures be devised for the establishment of an institution of learning, and commending the subject to the favorable attention of the annual conferences. This resolution, after full discussion, was happily adopted by a nearly unanimous vote. The subject will be found more fully referred to in an appropriate place in this volume.

In its election of general church officers this conference made radical changes. On counting the ballots for bishops it was found that an entirely new board had been elected, namely, J. J. Glossbrenner, John Russel, and William Hanby. David Edwards, afterward Bishop Edwards, succeeded Mr. Hanby as editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and the paper was ordered to be issued weekly.

An important step was taken in providing a course of reading for licentiates in the ministry. This was the beginning of what has since grown into a very complete system of study, and of inestimable value in the equipping of young men for the broadening requirements of the ministerial office.

Four new conferences were authorized—the East Penn-

sylvania, the Illinois, the St. Joseph, and the Iowa, and provision was made for the division of the Indiana.

The General Conference of 1841 had requested some of the older ministers then living to furnish to a committee, consisting of C. Smith, J. Erb, and J. Russel, "all the facts in their possession in relation to the rise, etc., of the United Brethren in Christ in America," the committee being charged with the duty of preparing from the materials so furnished a history of the Church. The movement seems to have resulted in complete failure, and at the General Conference of 1845 the subject was brought up again. The conference then appointed Henry G. Spayth to undertake the work. With many advantages in his favor, Mr. Spayth found the task by no means an easy one. After some delay he set about the work, and, finally, in January, 1850, he completed his manuscript. Careful revision followed, and the history was issued in 1851. Every student of this work will be impressed with its great value as an early and trustworthy source of materials for United Brethren history. With his education chiefly in the German language, Mr. Spayth's style is frequently found defective, and one could wish that some things had been given more fully. But the work proves the possession on his part not only of extensive knowledge of the subjects treated, but a discriminating grasp of the causes which led up to the founding of the Church and its subsequent development through the early part of the present century.

### III. THE TENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1849.

The tenth General Conference convened at Germantown, in Montgomery County, Ohio, on May 14, 1849. Thirty-seven delegates, representing thirteen conferences, were in attendance. The presiding bishops were Russel, Glossbrenner, and Hanby.

Aside from the usual business pertaining to any General Conference, including the election of general officers, only a single subject awakened much interest. This was the subject of secret societies, destined not many years afterward to acquire so large a place in the counsels of the Church. In 1833 the rule against Freemasonry had been adopted by the General Conference. Since then the subject had rested in quiet, except in 1841, when the prohibition clause against secret combinations was adopted as a part of the Constitution. Some minor orders, especially the Sons of Temperance, had now grown into prominence. A considerable number of the younger people of the Church had become connected with the latter order, generally in the belief that as Freemasonry was particularly named in the law incorporated in the Discipline, connection with the Sons of Temperance was not prohibited. An ordinance intended to cover the entire field of secret combinations was offered by Caleb W. Witt, of the White River Conference, in the words :

Freemasonry, in every sense of the word, shall be totally prohibited, and there shall be no connection with secret combinations (a secret combination is one whose initiatory ceremony or bond of union is a secret); and any member found connected with such a society shall be affectionately admonished twice or thrice by the preacher in charge, and if such member does not desist in a reasonable time he shall be notified to appear before the tribunal to which he is amenable; and if he still refuses to desist he shall be expelled from the Church.

The motion to adopt this measure into the Discipline led to a long and almost wholly one-sided discussion. The members earnestly opposing the adoption were Jacob Bachtel and Jacob Markwood. Mr. Markwood, afterward bishop, later assumed radical grounds against secret orders, while Mr. Resler, who here spoke and voted for adoption, was one of the earliest and most vigorous among the

liberals. The ordinance was adopted by a vote of thirty-three to two, Markwood and Bachtel voting nay. Burtner and Rhinehart asked to be excused from voting. Thus the General Conference entered upon the more severely restrictive legislation which was subsequently followed by so strong a reaction.

At this conference David Edwards was first called to the episcopal service, the work to which the remainder of his life was given. Bishops Glossbrenner and Erb were reëlected, the latter after having been out of the office for four years. Bishop Hanby was again returned to the *Religious Telescope*; David Strickler was continued on the *Fröhliche Botschafter*, and Nehemiah Altman, who had served during the previous term under appointment by the board of trustees, was elected publishing agent. Mr. Altman was a Jew by birth. His conversion to the Christian faith occurred at Lewisburg, Ohio. He entered the ministry soon after, and his abilities, united with energy and vigilance, soon came to be recognized. After his connection with the Publishing House ceased, he removed east, became a member of the Pennsylvania Conference, and did efficient service as a pastor, his principal work being done in the city of Baltimore.

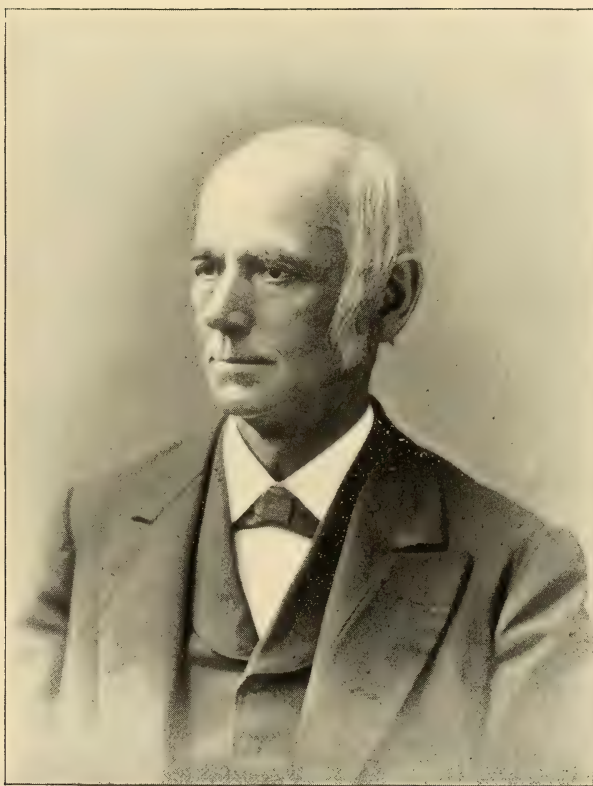
The conference remained in session twelve days.

#### IV. PERSONAL NOTES.

##### 1. J. J. Glossbrenner, D.D.

Among the bishops elected by the General Conference of 1845 was one whose name must ever stand as one of the most eminent in the first century of the Church, that of Jacob John Glossbrenner. Bishop Glossbrenner was born in Hagerstown, Maryland, on July 24, 1812, and was of German descent. His parents were mem-





JACOB J. GLOSSBRENNER.



bers of the Lutheran Church, and the baptism and early training of their children were in that denomination. The father died when Jacob was in his seventh year, and the mother was left with the care of four children, ranging in age from four to eleven. The sons, as soon as they were old enough, were put to learning trades, Jacob being apprenticed to a silversmith and watchmaker in Hagerstown when he was fourteen years of age. He was converted at the age of seventeen, under the preaching of William R. Rhinehart, then a young presiding elder in the Hagerstown, or original, Conference, and joined the United Brethren Church. He was appointed soon after as leader for a class of young persons, mostly about his own age, and in this work he devoted much time to the study of the Scriptures, acquiring thus early that habit of close Scripture study which characterized all his life. In the spring of 1830, at a camp-meeting in Washington County, when he was in his eighteenth year, he was surprised by being handed a license to exhort. The license was signed by Rev. George A. Guething, son of Rev. George A. Guething, the friend of Otterbein. Mr. Guething told him he might also preach as opportunity offered, or his older brethren desired him. A year later, the Virginia Conference having then been formed by division of the original conference, he attended the session of that body, in Shenandoah County, Virginia, and became one of its members. Thus in the nineteenth year of his age began the ministerial career of a young man who was destined to fill so illustrious a place in the labors and the growth of the Church during the half century which followed, a career which was not to be interrupted for a single year until the Master called him to his great reward. After three years of service as a circuit preacher he was chosen, then in his twenty-second year, to the office

of presiding elder, which position he filled for four consecutive years. From the beginning he gave large promise of the eminence to which he attained as a preacher. He rose rapidly in success and acceptance with the people. In 1837 he was elected to the General Conference, and again in 1841 and 1845. He was thus a member of the two General Conferences by which the Constitution of the Church was formed. When chosen to the office of bishop he was in the thirty-third year of his age. Thus his more direct labors for his own conference, for which he cherished to the end of his life the tenderest regard, were suddenly brought to a close, while he entered upon that broader field which gave his service to the entire denomination.

There are two aspects of Bishop Glossbrenner's life which have in a special sense left a permanent impression. One of these relates to his character as a presiding officer. Here he rose to a height but rarely attained. It would be difficult to find, either in ecclesiastical or civil life, a finer development of the qualities requisite to the head of an assembly than was possessed by Bishop Glossbrenner. In presiding over conferences, and especially the General Conferences, he was ever on the alert, so that nothing ever escaped his attention. He possessed a calm poise and power of control which never forsook him, and in the multiplication of motions, of every class, following in quick succession, and in the peculiar intricacies of business which sometimes arise, he was never confused. His rulings on parliamentary questions were clear, strong, and just, so that doubt as to their correctness rarely found expression. In the discussion of issues where members were sharply divided into parties, his own preferences were never manifested while he sat in the chair, and all speakers were treated with the utmost impartiality. If he felt that he ought to express his sentiments on any particular issue,



he did so after the vote was taken, giving the conference the benefit of his judgment and counsel.

The second aspect in which Bishop Glossbrenner rose to an unusual eminence was in his character as a preacher. It was in the pulpit that his extraordinary powers found their freest play. His sermons, thoroughly prepared in all their details, though extemporaneously delivered, were models of compactness and strength. Never were sermons preached that abounded more richly in appropriate Scripture quotation, or conveyed more forcibly the great truths of the inspired Word. Dr. Drury, in his "Life of Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner, D.D.," says: "It is not too much to say that he was recognized by persons of all degrees of culture as one of the grandest preachers of the gospel that our land has produced. Once having preached a dedicatory sermon, a number of ministers of other churches being present, a very clerical and able Episcopal minister became so excited over the grand scriptural sermon of Bishop Glossbrenner that he rushed up to the pastor of the United Brethren congregation, saying: 'It is wonderful, wonderful, indeed! Never has there been such preaching since the days of St. Paul. That man ought to be set up somewhere as a model for all other preachers to copy!'"<sup>1</sup>

In his private and social life Bishop Glossbrenner possessed qualities that made him ever a welcome guest and companion in the homes of the people among whom so large a part of his time was necessarily spent. Warm, genial, kind, sometimes indulging in humor, but always discreet and eminently Christian, he was everywhere received with open doors and open hearts. He knew well also how to enter into the afflictions and sorrows of others. A lady of wide experience remarked of him that the

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Glossbrenner*, p. 286.

sweetest, tenderest, most sympathetic prayer she ever heard uttered in the sick-room was by Bishop Glossbrenner, his great, warm heart pouring itself out in fervent supplication in behalf of the sick one.

On the attitude of the Church toward secret organizations he was properly classed with the liberals, always doubting the wisdom of extreme legislation, but supporting the law in his administration.

During the period of the War of the Rebellion Bishop Glossbrenner was prevented from attending to the duties of his district. Residing within the lines of the Confederate armies, he was subjected to all the strict necessities laid upon non-combatants. He might have come north during the earlier stages, but he chose to remain—wisely, as the event proved—with the Church in Virginia, to do what he could to prevent the flock from becoming scattered. His prudent demeanor, both as to speech and acts, enabled him to do this, and thus to render to the Church during those stormy days an invaluable service. He was generally believed by the Confederate officers to be in sympathy with the Union cause, but as he gave no direct offense he was left undisturbed, and was even sometimes asked to preach to the Confederate soldiers. He had the fullest confidence and respect of General Stonewall Jackson and other leaders of the Confederate armies. Near the close of 1863 he applied to the Confederate authorities for a pass to come north, to visit the spring session of the Pennsylvania Conference, as also the northern half of the Virginia Conference. A pass was issued to him by Jefferson Davis, at the request of Colonel Baldwin, then in the Confederate Congress. The only restriction laid upon him was that he should reveal nothing as to the strength or location of the Confederate armies. The delays he met prevented him from reaching the Pennsylvania Conference in time for

its session. He spent a while among friends at Chambersburg and elsewhere, and then, receiving a pass from Major-General Couch, commander of the department of the Susquehanna, he returned to Virginia. The same restrictions were laid upon him by General Couch as on the Confederate side when he came north. Near the close of the War, in the spring of 1865, Bishop Glossbrenner came north again to attend the General Conference at Western, Iowa. Previous suspicions that he had been disloyal to the Union were here repeated by some, and the bishop declined to preside over the conference until his loyalty could be vindicated. He was invited by the conference to make a personal statement at an hour named. His defense of his course, and his deep earnestness and manifest sincerity, taken in connection with all his past record for integrity and honor, completely swept the conference. A strong resolution of confidence and approval was then offered by a member, and was carried by the nearly unanimous vote of the conference, only two members being found to dissent.

A long period of service was, in the providence of God, allotted to Bishop Glossbrenner. He lived to a ripe old age, and for ten quadrenniums, or fully forty years, he was in the active superintendency. They were years of toilsome labors, of extensive travels, of great efficiency, and abounding fruits. But old age came at last, and the time when the laborer must rest. The General Conference of 1885, at Fostoria, Ohio, on account of his failing strength, did not think it wise to impose on him further the duties of an active bishop, but, unwilling that after so long and honorable a career he should die out of the harness, it created for him the office of bishop *emeritus*. He was then elected to this office by an almost unanimous vote, only two members dissenting.

During the quadrennium just past he had been bereft

of his faithful wife, who for more than fifty years had walked by his side, and now the time was approaching when he, too, should pass over the river. His growing infirmities increased upon him, and toward the close of the year 1886 it became apparent that the end was drawing near. His home during a good part of his life was at Churchville, Augusta County, Virginia, and here after the death of his wife he lived with his son-in-law. Here he was visited by many of the ministers and friends from near and far. Among the visits which he most appreciated was that of his long-time friend, Mr. John Dodds, of Dayton, Ohio, who made the trip to Virginia expressly to see him once more. To him he said, "If I could preach again, just once more, I would preach Jesus; I would preach from his words to the disciples on the Sea of Galilee, 'It is I; be not afraid.'" Afterward he said, "My title is clear, not because I have preached the gospel, but alone through the love and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ." Dr. Drury, in relating this, continues: "After Mr. Dodds had bidden him good-bye, leaving him lying in his bed, quiet, but deeply affected, he started to leave the house. The family also stepped outside. Looking back, they saw the bishop standing near the door, having gotten out of bed unassisted. With hand uplifted and streaming eyes he said: 'Brother Dodds, tell the brethren it is all right. My home is over there.'"

The end came on January 7, 1887, when he calmly fell asleep. His age was seventy-four years, five months, and thirteen days. For fifty-six years he had been a minister, and forty-two years a bishop, and so remarkably was health sustained during this long period that not a single year was lost from active work. His remains were laid to rest on January 11 in the cemetery at Churchville. Bishop Weaver, agreeably to the request of Bishop Glossbrenner,



preached the funeral sermon, paying a tender and eloquent tribute to the memory of his departed associate.

It is more than an ordinary delight to linger over this grand and beautiful life, but the necessary limitations of this sketch forbid further extension. The reader is referred to the admirable Life of Bishop Glossbrenner, by Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D.

## 2. *John Russel.*

Another strong man elected by this conference to the office of bishop, a typical pioneer of the early days, was John Russel (in the original German, *Roszel*). Mr. Russel was born on March 18, 1799, at Pipe Creek, Maryland, one of the places near Baltimore which Bishop Otterbein often visited, and where his grandfather, an immigrant from Germany, was converted under Otterbein's preaching. His parents were devout in their religious life, and he was brought up under the most careful instruction. He was converted at an early age, and soon was found, at the request of his brethren, leading meetings, and delivering earnest spiritual exhortations, though without any thought of the future work which awaited him. When he was approaching young manhood, he was apprenticed to a blacksmith, learned the smith's trade, and was afterward provided by his father with a set of tools to carry on the business. It was not long, however, until he realized that the Lord had other work for him. With his father's consent the forge and hammer were abandoned, and he started for a conference which was held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Here he was licensed to preach, Bishop Newcomer signing his credentials. All the East being still included in one conference district, the bishop took him with him to Virginia, where he started him on a circuit. He was then in his nineteenth year, with but

limited education and experience, but with his heart aflame with the great theme which he brought to the people. His second year was in Pennsylvania, his circuit again being large, and appointments often difficult to reach. When his horse broke down, he was nothing daunted, but continued his long journeys on foot. The third year, being then twenty years of age, he responded to the calls for ministers from what was then still thought of as the "far west," and came to Ohio. He joined the Miami Conference, and was appointed to his first charge in the district which afterward became the Scioto Conference. Here he toiled industriously as a circuit preacher and presiding elder, after the true pioneer manner, until he was called east to become pastor of the Otterbein Church. He preached with equal facility in the German and English languages, frequently repeating a sermon in German if it was first preached in English, or in English if it was first in German. Often he read a text first in one language and then in the other, and next announced the divisions of his sermon in both, then following with one division in both languages, and so on alternately to the end.

Mr. Russel was twice elected to the general superintendency of the Church. He was first a delegate to the General Conference of 1833, then of 1841, taking part in the framing of the Constitution of the Church. He was again a member in 1845, and by that conference was elected bishop. Retiring from the office after one term of four years, he was again chosen in 1857, this time to superintend especially the German work. He again served one term.

In person Bishop Russel was tall, straight, strongly built, and of dark complexion. He wore his hair combed straight back over his high, arching brow, letting it fall well down toward his shoulders. His carriage, manner of

address, and general bearing all indicated a man much above the average—a man, indeed, born to rule. He was firm in his convictions, did not easily let go a principle he once fully espoused, and yet was open to the light of advanced ideas.

Mr. Russel was among the first to see the necessity for a publishing house for the Church, was a member of the first board of trustees appointed to originate it, and so sincerely did he give himself to its support that he sold his property to obtain money to get the enterprise started, loaning to it the proceeds of the sale on long time and at low interest. In 1840 he began to publish, in Baltimore, a German monthly periodical called *Die Geschäftige Martha*, which, in 1841, was merged into the official German paper established by the General Conference. To the cause of education he was for many years less friendly, fearing that colleges, if built by the Church, would become what were then frequently called “preacher factories.” It is related that a former president of Lebanon Valley College, with the view of enlisting the Germans of eastern Pennsylvania in the support of the college, invited Bishop Russel to visit the institution and preach a sermon. In due time the bishop came, and preached a sermon from the words, “Das Wissen bläset auf” (“Knowledge puffeth up”). The sermon was so effective in the opposite direction from what the president expected that in speaking of it he remarked that he would try in the future to manage the Germans without the bishop’s help. On this subject, however, he materially relented toward the close of his life, so that he gave the sum of ten thousand dollars to the Pennsylvania and East Pennsylvania conferences for the purpose of educating theologically the ministerial candidates in the conferences. The gift, however, was hampered with such conditions as to make

their fulfillment difficult. On another subject, like many others of the foremost men in the Church, he changed his attitude. In the General Conference of 1841 he assisted in putting into the Constitution the clause against connection with secret orders. He was present at the General Conference of 1869, an interested listener to the discussion of two and a half days, after which he said to a friend that "he could live very happily and contentedly in the Church if the conference should adopt the proposition of the liberals."<sup>1</sup> Had he lived to the time of the recent conflicts, there can be little doubt that his position would have been found with Glossbrenner, Weaver, Dickson, and Castle, all of whom at one time supported the restrictive legislation of the Church.

During the later years of his life his home was with his son-in-law, a Mr. Guething, near Keedysville, and only a short distance from the great battlefield of Antietam. His house was taken for a Confederate hospital, and filled with sick and wounded soldiers. Bishop Russel remained, giving to the unfortunate men all the help he could. Age at last began to tell upon his strong frame, and the time came when he was to pass into the beyond to join the company of the immortals. His death occurred on December 21, 1870, he being in the seventy-second year of his age. Bishop Dickson preached an appropriate sermon on the funeral occasion.

Bishop Russel will long be remembered as a man of strong personality, of cheerful disposition, of ready wit, often indulging in practical jokes, as devoted to the Church, enduring in the fullest measure the privations and hardships of an early itinerant's life, and as one of the real builders in some of her interests, while honestly averse to others, and his name will remain as worthy of a high place on the roll of the eminent men of the past.

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneer Address* of Prof. H. Garst, D.D., at Miami Conference session, 1896.



3. *William Hanby.*

The third bishop elected by the General Conference of 1845 was Rev. William Hanby. Mr. Hanby was born in Washington County, Pennsylvania, on April 8, 1808. His childhood life was passed in poverty. When yet quite young he found a good home in the family of a farmer of the Society of Friends, where he remained until the age of seventeen, when he desired to learn the trade of a saddler, and was apprenticed to a man named Good. His master proved himself quite the reverse of what his name suggested, and young Hanby found his condition one of absolute slavery. At the age of twenty he came to Ohio, finding employment at the town of Somerset. At twenty-two he was converted, and soon after felt the divine impulse summoning him to the work of the ministry. In 1831, at the age of twenty-three, he was licensed to preach, and joined the Scioto Conference. His first charge, like many of that day, had nearly thirty appointments, and required four weeks to make the round, with an average of about one sermon a day. For his first year's service, with a wife to provide for, he received the sum of thirty-five dollars. But he had other and richer emoluments, for under his preaching there were converted and added to the Church that year about one hundred souls. In those days the prayer was often heard for ministers that they "might have souls for their hire." Very frequently it was almost their only compensation, but it was a reward which many having larger salaries might well covet. In 1834, the second year of his itinerant life, he was elected presiding elder, and in 1837 he was chosen a member of the General Conference, which convened at Germantown, Ohio, where he was elected general agent and treasurer of the newly organized Publishing House at Circleville. In 1839 he was elected editor of the *Religious Telescope*,

its first editor, Rev. William R. Rhinehart, having resigned. In 1845 he was elected bishop. He served in this office four years, when he was again elected editor of the *Religious Telescope*, with duties of publisher added. In 1853 his more public connection with church service ended, but he served for many years on some of its boards, as a trustee of Otterbein University and also of the Publishing House.

Of the large family of Mr. Hanby, two, a son and a daughter, became widely known; the first, the Rev. Benjamin R. Hanby, to the musical world, through his popular songs, chiefly among them "Darling Nelly Gray," which joined a powerful influence to that of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin," in forming that tide of anti-slavery sentiment which was finally to sweep the dark curse from our land;<sup>1</sup> the other, Mrs. A. L. Billheimer, who with her husband accomplished valuable pioneer missionary work in Africa, and has since been prominently identified with the Woman's Missionary Board.

Mr. Hanby died at his home in Westerville, Ohio, on May 17, 1880, being a little past seventy-two years of age. In his closing days he gave numerous expressions showing that his trust was unshaken in the near presence of death. The last words he was heard to utter were, "I am in the midst of glory." An incident of thrilling interest which occurred not many days before his death was recalled at

<sup>1</sup> It is of peculiar interest to note that an expurgated edition of this popular song was prepared by the publishers for circulation in the South, those features which might offend Southern feeling being carefully eliminated. The song had an immense sale, equaled, it was said, by only one other song ever published. It could be heard sung in almost every home in the North, and widely in its altered form throughout the South. Both the words and the music were Mr. Hanby's production. Mr. Hanby was a graduate of Otterbein University, and a preacher for a few years of brilliant promise, when failing health and death ended his career. This reference to his song is justified by the fact of its large influence, through its tender and pathetic power, in molding the sentiment of the people of the North on the character of slavery as an institution in our national life.

his funeral by Rev. J. S. Mills, now Bishop Mills, then pastor of the church at Westerville. Joseph Cook had been brought to the university to deliver a lecture, and hearing of Mr. Hanby's spiritual condition, and that earlier in his life he had frequently aided slaves fleeing for their freedom, desired to call upon him. The visit was made in company with Mr. Mills and President Thompson, of the university. Mr. Mills says of the interview: Mr. Cook "listened with marked interest to the words spoken by the suffering man. He spoke of his sympathy with Mr. Cook's work in the field of Christian science [using the term in its higher sense], and expressed his happiness at being permitted to see him; at the close of which Mr. Cook said, 'I have come for your blessing,' and taking in his hands both the hands of the bishop, he reverently bowed his head while Mr. Hanby gave to him the earnest benediction, 'May the blessing of the Lord God be upon you and upon your work.' Mr. Cook responded, 'And may we meet in the city that hath foundations.' Mr. Hanby finished the quotation, 'Whose builder and maker is God.' To which the great scholar replied, 'Even so may it be.' Every one was thrilled as this Spirit-prompted ritual was uttered, and in perfect silence, which no one dared to break, the visitors passed solemnly out."<sup>1</sup>

A most important service was rendered to the Church by Mr. Hanby in the preparation of its history from about the year 1825, where its first historian, Mr. Spayth, left it off, down to the year 1850. It is in greatly condensed form, but has served a valuable end. Mr. Hanby was personally cognizant of much of what he wrote, and other materials were gathered from events of recent date. The book was published in 1851, in connection with Mr. Spayth's history.

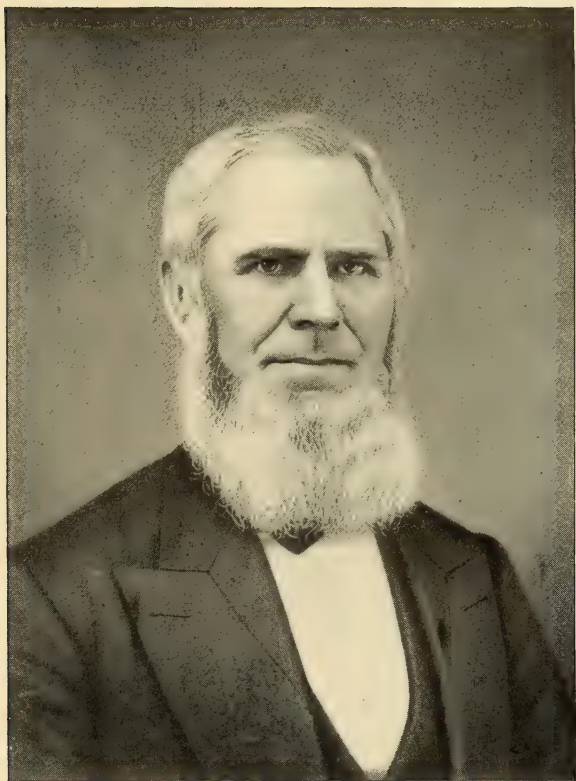
<sup>1</sup> Thompson's *Our Bishops*, p. 359.

*4. David Edwards, D.D.*

Among the strongest figures that look down to us out of the past, is that of Bishop David Edwards. It is just a little over twenty years since he was called to his reward, but he is remembered with a distinctness as of yesterday. In height a little above medium, firmly built, with shoulders sloping upward toward a strongly outlined and well-covered head, and with an earnest face and deeply-set, searching eyes, his picture is sharply photographed on the memory. In the pulpit he was a man of might, preaching sermons with a clear ring, penetrating often with keenest search the hidden things of the heart, making men fear and tremble as under the very eye of God, at other times portraying the rich things of the gospel in such glowing colors that the sermon seemed like a triumphal march.

Bishop Edwards was of Welsh birth, his early home being amid the mountains of north Wales. He was born on May 5, 1816, of an ancestry which preserved almost unchanged through centuries their strong race characteristics. From this ancestry and from the rugged hills among which his early childhood years were spent he doubtless derived in large part those sturdy qualities which so strongly marked his life. In 1821 his parents, with the family of children, came to America, remaining in Baltimore, Maryland, for two years, after which, in 1823, they removed to Delaware, Ohio. They were members of the Presbyterian Church. The father dying in 1825, David, three years later, when he was twelve years old, entered a woolen factory, to learn the trade of carding and cloth dressing. At seventeen he left home, with the benedictions of his pious mother, to find more remunerative employment in mills near Lancaster, Ohio. Here, a year subsequently, he attended a





DAVID EDWARDS.



protracted meeting held by the United Brethren, and was soon after converted. His religious life at once came to be marked with such sincerity and earnestness that those about him saw evidences of a divine call to the work of the ministry. He was not himself a stranger to this thought, for the same feeling had been with him quite early in his life. He tells us that at the age of seven he was impressed that he would be called to be a minister, and that from that time on he sought the Lord in secret and led a moral life. In the Sunday school and under preaching he often wept and poured out his heart in prayer. Thus from his childhood the oil of the divine consecration was upon him.

On May 23, 1835, just about a year after his conversion, and when he was but a few days past nineteen years of age, he received quarterly-conference license to preach, and soon after entered regularly the itinerant work, at first as an associate with Rev. M. Ambrose, who was his pastor when his license was given. His first regular circuit had twenty-eight appointments, and required four weeks and three hundred and sixty miles of travel for one round. His membership throughout his life was in the Scioto Conference.

Few men probably have entered upon a ministerial career with greater misgivings as to their personal fitness for the work. An exceedingly sensitive nature brought him frequently into the deepest discouragement over what he felt to be failures in the pulpit. And yet great success attended his ministry. On every charge he served, his earnest preaching wrought conviction, and large numbers were added to the Church. At Circleville, where he became pastor in 1844, the phenomenal increase in membership from one hundred and twenty-five to seven hundred and sixteen within a single year was reported.

In 1845 he was elected to the office of presiding elder, and the General Conference which convened soon after, in May, 1845, most unexpectedly to himself, elected him editor of the *Religious Telescope*. Writing was never an easy task or a pleasurable employment to Bishop Edwards. Throughout his life he wrote only when a sense of duty impelled him. When he accepted the duty laid upon him by his brethren, that of editing the *Religious Telescope*, he took up what he felt to be an irksome task. But he undertook the work with the same profound sense of direct responsibility to God with which he preached the gospel. In his choice of subjects and in his manner of treating them, this feeling was ever present. His range of leading subjects may be regarded as somewhat circumscribed. The one subject to which he gave more thought and more discussion than to any other was that of personal holiness. Dr. L. Davis, his biographer, says :

“The great subject on which the mind and heart of Mr. Edwards were employed more than any other,—indeed more than all others,—. . . was holiness of heart and life. This was his central thought on all questions of church life and spirit. In this field, at least, he was at home. And no wonder, for it was with him a rich experience. He made the *Telescope* ring with this subject as it never did before nor has since. It inspired his best editorials, and governed very largely the selections made. The proclamation of the subject in his first editorial became the keynote for correspondents throughout the entire term. In a word, everything was made to bend to this one all-absorbing theme. No mind was ever more indefatigably employed, no heart ever more fully poured out, in connection with the definition and advocacy of this doctrine than were the mind and heart of David Edwards.” To



this delineation Dr. Davis adds the discriminating remark, "It is doubtful if the particular doctrine of entire sanctification has ever been stated more clearly, more profoundly, and in a way less liable to objection, than as stated by him."<sup>1</sup>

The sustained and earnest treatment of this subject in the editorials of the *Religious Telescope* by Bishop Edwards, during the four years of his editorship, had a very marked influence upon the thought of the Church. Other writers for the columns of the paper gave this subject special prominence, and many of the ministers throughout the denomination pressed it earnestly upon the attention of the people. As a result the spiritual life of the Church was greatly quickened, both in the pulpit and the pews, and it is safe to say that there was a depth of religious experience attained such as is not always witnessed in meetings held for the special promotion of holiness.

The General Conference of 1849 reelected Mr. Edwards to the office of editor. But he had wearied with the duties of writing, and promptly declined, preferring to devote himself entirely to the ministry of the word. Bishop Hanby, who had preceded him as editor, and had served four years as bishop, was then elected in his stead, and Mr. Edwards was immediately elected to the office of bishop. In this office he served with unremitting toil until his labors ceased at the call of the Master.

Bishop Edwards was a man of strong prejudices, believing intensely in whatever he espoused, yet open also to conviction to opposite views. The secret-society question loomed into great prominence during the last twenty-five years of his life, and he was found on the radical side. He was not, however, so unreasoning and unrelenting as were some, and was disposed, when the evils of excessive

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Bishop David Edwards, D.D.*, by Lewis Davis, D.D., pp. 78, 79.

legislation became so apparent, to favor a more lenient policy. He died before the crises of 1885 and 1889 came. Had he lived to that time, there is every reason to believe that with Bishop Dickson, and many others of the best men among us, his loyalty to the Church he had so long and earnestly toiled to build up would have risen above devotion to any one principle of polity.

Bishop Edwards spent nearly the whole of his life in what was then called the West. He presided over the Ohio District, and over the districts east and west of the Mississippi River. His last appointment was to the East District, which fixed his residence during his closing years in Baltimore. He served twenty-seven years in the office of bishop, the last three on the East District, and forty-one years in the ministry. He retained his great power in the pulpit as long as his physical strength remained. He was smitten down in the ripe maturity of his great powers, his age being sixty years, one month, and one day. His death occurred in the bishop's parsonage at Baltimore, on June 6, 1876. His remains were brought to Dayton for interment, and after appropriate services were laid to rest in the beautiful Woodland Cemetery.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCES OF 1853-1861

#### I. THE HOME, FRONTIER, AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE period extending from 1853 to 1861 was ushered in by two important events. The first of these was the organization of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society. So far-reaching have been the results of this step that it may be regarded as marking an epoch in the progressive development of the Church. The previous board, organized at an earlier session of the General Conference, had never adopted any aggressive measures in extending the missionary work, and the planting of the Church in new fields was chiefly left to the local societies in the annual conferences, or to such providential methods as might arise in connection with the removal of United Brethren ministers or families to newer portions of the country.

The foremost among the annual conferences in perfecting its plans was the Sandusky, and foremost among the members of that conference in gaining a broad perception of the needs of the work and of the methods to be employed was the Rev. J. C. Bright. Mr. Bright was a member of the General Conference which met at Miltonville, in Butler County, Ohio, on May 9, 1853. He conceived the idea of bringing into more thorough organization the missionary work of the Church, by forming a strong central board, with officers actively employed in its service, and committing to this board the prosecution

and general oversight of the work. His plan embraced the home and frontier fields, and the foreign also, as soon as a foreign mission should be projected. He proposed that all existing local or conference missionary organizations should become tributary to the central board, and that in every conference where such organizations did not already exist auxiliary or branch societies should be formed. Thus the plan was intended to bring, as far as possible, the entire Church into active coöperation with the general missionary society. Mr. Bright laid before the conference a constitution which provided for the organization and government of the proposed society, which, upon full consideration, with such amendments as met with favor, was adopted. The constitution thus adopted has remained substantially the same to the present time and the society organized under it has proved one of the most efficient of the various departments of the work of the Church. For a larger view of the society and the work it has accomplished, the reader is referred to another part of this volume. For a copy of the constitution see Book of Discipline.

## II. THE REMOVAL OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE.

Another measure which contributed to making the General Conference of 1853 a memorable one related to the Publishing House of the Church. The reader will remember that at its organization it was located in the thrifty, but small, town of Circleville, Ohio. It was here situated in the midst of its friends—strong men, who cared for it nobly in the days of its infancy. In 1849 an effort had been made to remove it to Cincinnati, but was unsuccessful. But the time had come when more advantageous business facilities were needed for the better enlargement of its work, and the conference, after mature deliberation,



decided upon its removal to the city of Dayton. This order, and the removal which followed immediately after, occasioned for a time great disappointment to the friends of the House at Circleville, but the wisdom of the conference in ordering this change of location has been abundantly demonstrated.

### III. LAY REPRESENTATION.

Among other subjects which awakened earnest discussion during the successive conference sessions, was that of admitting the laity to a part with the ministry in the counsels of the annual conferences. Their admission to seats in the General Conference was at that time less thought about, since there was a constitutional bar which precluded such a privilege. "All ecclesiastical power herein granted, to make or repeal any rule of discipline, is vested in a General Conference, which shall consist of elders, elected by the members in every conference district throughout the society." So said the Constitution of 1841, and the provision could not be changed except by the vote of the entire Church. But there was no obstacle to the admission of laymen to seats in the annual conferences, except the will of the General Conference. It is not to be forgotten, however, that while there were some, both in the ministry and in the laity, who foresaw the important advantages to be gained by the introduction of lay representation as a feature of our church polity, there was not at that time any wide-spread desire among the laymen for such representation. While some laymen asked for it, and sought in every proper way to awaken interest in the subject, the great body of the Church was indifferent in regard to it. A single memorial only came to the General Conference of 1853, and but few to the sessions of 1857 and 1861. These memorials were properly referred,

and the subject was afterward courteously dealt with on the conference floor. Earnest advocates stood up for the principle, but the votes showed that the ministers composing the successive conferences were overwhelmingly opposed. The belief prevailed, and found expression, that all ecclesiastical power and administration were properly committed to the ministry. Few of those who then opposed could foresee how within their own time sentiment would so far undergo change that lay delegates would sit in our annual and General conferences.

#### IV. TOTAL DEPRAVITY.

The subject of total depravity, of which so little is now heard, was about this time a live question in the Church. Much was written upon it for the columns of the *Religious Telescope*, and in the General Conference its discussion excited the deepest interest. It was considered important that the applicants for license to preach should declare clearly their belief in the doctrine, and the subject was given a place among the questions which applicants were required to answer. A committee to whom the subject was referred reported the following as the form of question :

Do you believe in the doctrine of natural, hereditary, and total depravity, as held by the Church?

This was in the conference of 1853. A long and animated discussion followed, with no prospect, for a long time, of coming to an agreement. The solution was finally reached by an explanatory amendment, offered by Bishop Glossbrenner, as follows :

1. By "depravity" is meant, not guilt, or liability to punishment, but the absence of holiness; which therefore unfits man for heaven.
2. By "natural" is meant that man is born with this absence of holiness.

3. By "hereditary" is meant that this unholy state is inherited from Adam.

4. By "total" is not meant that a man or child cannot become more unholy, or that he is irrecoverably unholy, nor that he is a mass of corruption, but that this absence of holiness must be predicated of all the faculties and powers of the soul.

This definition of the theological bearings of the subject proved generally satisfactory, and the amendment was adopted. The word "complete" was then substituted for the word "total," and the report as proposed was adopted. This, however, was not the end of the controversy, and the subject was destined to come up again. Discussion continued in the columns of the *Religious Telescope*, and when the General Conference of 1857 assembled in Cincinnati it was expected that the interest of the session would largely be concentrated upon this question. An editorial appeared in the *Religious Telescope* referring to the manner in which it was disposed of:

"On Friday [the day before the report was presented] it was well known that the committee on revision would reach the much-agitated and very perplexing depravity question. There were some indications that a tedious, severe, and long-protracted, if not acrimonious and unbrotherly, struggle would ensue. Contrary, however, to general expectation, the committee, which consists of one member from each annual conference, came to a perfect agreement, and had prepared a report which was this morning presented to the conference."

The report of the committee provided that the question to applicants for license to preach, with the appended explanatory note, as adopted four years previously, be expunged from the Discipline, and that the following be inserted in its stead:

Do you believe that man, abstract of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is fallen from original righteousness, and is not only entirely

destitute of holiness, but is inclined to evil, and only evil, and that continually; and that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God?

This report was adopted by the conference with but a single dissenting vote. So surprised and delighted were the members at this unexpected and happy result that it was proposed to sing the doxology, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." All joined in the singing with unusual fervor. The form of question as thus adopted, with only a change of one or two words, has since remained unchallenged in the Discipline.

#### V. SECRET SOCIETIES.

This subject, after the legislation of the General Conference of 1849, began to be a source of unrest in the Church, and of debate in the General Conferences, leading often, as time advanced, to much bitterness and acrimonious utterance, until by the action of the Church, in the quadrennium between 1885 and 1889, it was practically set at rest. The feeling which revolted against the law of 1849 was at first limited to a small number of the members of the conferences. But the belief in the unwisdom of the extreme legislation continued to assert itself. In the conference of 1857 a paper was offered by J. B. Resler as a substitute for the rule of 1849. That the reader may see how very little was asked in the direction of modification, the proposition is here reproduced:

There shall be no connection with secret oathbound combinations. Any member found connected with such combination shall be affectionately admonished twice or thrice by the preacher in charge, and if such member does not desist in a reasonable time he shall be notified to appear before the tribunal to which he is amenable, and if he still refuse to desist he shall be expelled.

The motion to adopt was debated at some length, Mr. Bachtel, of Virginia, supporting Mr. Resler in the discus-



sion, Mr. Markwood, J. Erb, and others opposing. The proposition was rejected by a vote of forty-six nays to five yeas.

The conference of 1861, at Westerville, Ohio, amended the rule by prescribing the manner of proceeding against persons offending. It added the words, "shall be dealt with as in case of other immoralities." The amendment was sustained by sixty-eight yeas, and opposed by five nays, one of the members voting nay subsequently changing his vote to yea. The use of the word "other" in connection with "immoralities" definitely classed connection with secret organizations as an immorality, and so proved unsatisfactory to many in the laity, the language being thought indefensible and needlessly offensive.

#### VI. THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

We have seen that the General Conference as early as 1821 embodied the voice of the Church in a distinct utterance against the institution of slavery. The rule adopted and placed in the Book of Discipline was strongly and clearly drawn, and could not be misunderstood. In time, however, there were found persons in membership in the Church who held slaves under peculiar circumstances, such as made it difficult, if not quite impossible, to manumit them, on account of the form of wills under which they were inherited, or the extreme old age of the slaves, whom it seemed cruel to set adrift. Some of the ministers, especially in Virginia and Maryland, found themselves embarrassed by these conditions, and a request was sent to the General Conference of 1857 for an explanation of the rule relating to slavery. The subject was carefully and considerably dealt with, but the conference stood firmly by the rule, and declared that the ministers must gently but firmly maintain the position

of the Church, and instructed the bishops visiting the Virginia Conference to make due inquiry if the law were enforced. This attitude of the conference, while working apparent temporary hardship, maintained the position of the Church and assisted in preserving its unity when some of our sister denominations were rent in twain.

#### VII. ELECTIONS OF BISHOPS.

The bishops chosen by the General Conference of 1853 were J. J. Glossbrenner and David Edwards, reëlected, and Lewis Davis. These were again elected in 1857, and John Russel was added to the number. In 1861 Bishops Glossbrenner and Edwards were reëlected, with Jacob Markwood and Daniel Shuck as associates, the last named being chosen especially for the work on the Pacific Coast. It was also decided to elect a bishop for the special superintendence of the German work, and Henry Kumler, Jun., was chosen.

The following resolution relating to Bible study in the institutions of learning was adopted in 1857 :

*Resolved*, That it is the advice of this General Conference to all who have control of the educational interests of the Church, to embrace in their regular course of study the Holy Scriptures as one of the books in which there shall be regular recitations.

#### VIII. PERSONAL NOTES.

##### 1. *Lewis Davis, D.D.*

One of the strongest figures in the councils, as also in the work, of the Church, during a period of half a century, was Rev. Lewis Davis, D.D. He was born near Newcastle, then in Botetourt County, Virginia, on February 14, 1814. His ancestry on his father's side was Welsh, while his mother was of Scotch descent. Thus he derived legitimately that resoluteness of character which so strongly

marked his life. His father was poor in worldly goods, and at eighteen the son left home to learn a trade. He chose that of a blacksmith, but his employer was chiefly engaged in tool-making, and so he learned that art. This man early saw in him the prophecy of a broader life than that of an artisan, and encouraged him to read, and also to attend the academy at Newcastle. In this school he spent about a year and a half, thus laying the foundations upon which he afterward erected the edifice of a solid education.

Mr. Davis's religious impressions began also during this time to take distinct form. He afterward spent some time in West Virginia as a teacher, and subsequently came across into Ohio. His conversion occurred under the ministry of Rev. William Davis, M.D., and after this his friends began to intimate to him that the Lord intended him for the ministry. He received his first license to preach when he was twenty-four years old. In the spring of the next year, 1839, he joined the Scioto Conference, and for eight years performed faithfully the work of an itinerant preacher, part of the time as presiding elder. He felt deeply the disadvantages of his limited education, but resolved to make the most of every possible opportunity for self-improvement. He carried his books with him, and when entering a house, after exchanging cheerful greetings, and spending a little time in conversation, he was accustomed to withdraw to some other part of the room and begin his studies. This did not always meet the approbation of the friends who entertained him, and various instances are related of the manner in which he was obliged to defend himself in order to be allowed to pursue his studies. On one occasion a kind-hearted but talkative brother said to him: "Brother Davis, I don't want that work done. While you are here, I want you to talk all the time. You are our preacher, and I pay you for

talking." "Brother," he replied, "I can't talk all the time, and if you won't allow me to study some while in your house I must go elsewhere, where I can study."<sup>1</sup> His perseverance in study soon gained for him the highest respect, and he was allowed to have his own way. His diligent attendance to study, thus sustained through a series of years, so broadened and strengthened his mind that by and by, though not having graduated from any college, he was deemed, and at that time justly, too, the most fit man in the denomination to assume the presidency of its first college, to which position he was elected three years after its founding. And this same earnest study, with the fruits following, seldom intermitted during his lifetime, led to his selection as the head of the theological seminary when it was founded twenty-one years later.

Mr. Davis, though not a member of the General Conference of 1845, united his influence with that of others in securing action by that body recommending the founding of an institution of learning for the Church. When the Scioto Conference began to move in this direction, and the Blendon Young Men's Seminary, at Westerville, Ohio, was purchased, he was among the foremost in urging forward the enterprise. He was appointed one of the trustees, and became soliciting agent for the project, himself making the first subscription ever made in the United Brethren Church for an educational institution. He found this hard work, encountering in some instances strong opposition from official sources. At the session of the Sandusky Conference, whose coöperation he sought, Bishop Russel, who was presiding, and who was for many years intensely averse to education undertaken by the Church, resolved that Mr. Davis should not be heard in the open conference, and repeatedly ruled him out of order when he sought

<sup>1</sup> Thompson's *Our Bishops*, p. 398.



to speak. When the vote was taken, the majority favored coöperation. At the Muskingum Conference, soon after, the same experience was repeated, the bishop peremptorily commanding him to "be still." Here the bishop carried the conference with him. The next year the action was reversed, and the conference came into line.

In 1850 Mr. Davis was elected president of Otterbein University. In 1853, though not a member of the General Conference, he was elected bishop. He performed the duties of this office, retaining the presidency of the college. In 1857 he was reëlected bishop. He then resigned the office of president, but two years later, on the resignation of President Alexander Owen, he was again called to be the head of the college. He then continued to fill this position with great distinction until he was called, in 1871, to the chair of theology and the relation of senior professor in Union Biblical Seminary, at Dayton. This position he held until 1885, when advancing years began to tell seriously upon him, and he was released from active duties. He was then made professor *emeritus*, in which relation he remained to the end of his life.

He was first elected to the General Conference in 1869, though he was twice before a member by virtue of being a bishop. After 1869 he was reëlected to each conference until 1885. As a member of the General Conference, while watchful over the various interests of the Church, there was one subject to which he gave supreme attention—the attitude of the Church toward secret organizations. On this he was intensely radical, giving it his most studious and unremitting thought. Other issues in the proceedings of the conferences were often watched by him and supported or opposed according to their supposed or possible bearing, near or remote, on this one central issue. To

such an extent did he yield himself to this that it became with him through many years a kind of morbid infatuation, and one could not but feel a regret that his great abilities for varied service should have been so far concentrated upon this one thing, as if there were no other evils for the Church to combat, no other great ends to achieve. His great abilities on the conference floor were always recognized. As a debater he was usually logical, always forcible; in speech and manner, ever dignified, never condescending. With his great strength he easily carried a large following of weaker men with him.

As a preacher Dr. Davis was entitled to eminent rank. He thought clearly and thoroughly, acquired a complete grasp of his subject, and spoke with deliberate self-possession, often with much warmth, frequently mellowing into great tenderness and beauty. He may be said to have been often eloquent, but his eloquence did not depend on the multiplication of words, or elaborated phrases, but was rather the result of a clear apprehension of truth, uttered in chaste and simple diction. In social life he was genial and kind, full of pleasant sunshine, but preserving always a dignity which is seldom attained, and never counterfeited. His home was the center of a large and generous hospitality.

As a writer Dr. Davis wielded an able pen. In his earlier years the columns of the *Religious Telescope* were frequently enriched by his contributions, usually on educational subjects. In his later years he wrote the "Life of Bishop David Edwards," a volume possessing permanent merit. On the slavery question, though born and brought up in Virginia, he was, like Bishop Markwood and others of our ministers in that State, one of the stanchest of abolitionists.

To many of his truest friends it was a source of pro-

found sorrow that his extreme attitude on the antisecrecy legislation carried him at last away from the moorings to which he had so long been anchored. The great body of the Church, wearied with the fanaticism and the incessant clamor of ultra-radicalism, began in time to yield to a strong reaction. This tendency, from being represented in the General Conferences preceding that of 1869 by a vote of less than five, gradually gained strength until in 1885 it was represented by more than a two-thirds majority, and radicalism began to look toward secession. Dr. Davis was not present in the General Conference of 1889, when secession became a fact, but his sympathies had been with the leaders, and he gave them subsequent support. He was now old, and the time of the end was drawing near. Meanwhile, he never asked for a letter of dismissal from the Summit Street Church, where he held his local membership, and where he and Mrs. Davis each were recognized with highest honor until they were called by the Master. In conversation with his pastor, Dr. G. M. Mathews, he sometimes playfully alluded to the fact that his name remained with the Summit Street congregation, but never asked for a change. He found it no easy task to separate himself from the Church to which he had given so many years of service, and which had so long honored him with its confidence and regard. After his death the quarterly conference of the charge passed resolutions, embodying the fact of his connection with the congregation and their body, and expressing sentiments appropriate to the occasion.

When the end came, on March 23, 1890, it found him serene in spirit, and fully prepared for the mysterious transition. The departure was a great spiritual triumph, and the recollection of the words spoken and the scenes witnessed will not easily fade from the memories of those who

visited the chamber from which his spirit took its flight. His remains, after appropriate services in the Summit Street Church, were laid to rest in the beautiful Woodland Cemetery at Dayton, not far from the spot where the body of Bishop Edwards sleeps. Five years later the body of Mrs. Davis, whose attachment and devotion to the Church never faltered, was laid beside that of her husband.

Dr. Davis will long be remembered for his great service in the educational work of the Church, a field in which he was its first and most distinguished pioneer, and to which he gave a greater number of years than have been given by any other in the same calling. His age at the time of his death was seventy-six years, one month, and nine days. Nineteen years he served as president of Otterbein University, fourteen years as senior professor in Union Biblical Seminary, and fifty-one years in the Christian ministry.

## 2. *Jacob Markwood.*

One of the most remarkable men whom the Church has yet produced was Bishop Jacob Markwood, of the Virginia Conference. He was born amid the romantic scenery of what is now West Virginia, near Charleston, in Jefferson County, on December 26, 1815. His father, John Markwood, was not a professor of religion. His mother was a woman of devout spirit, a member of the Presbyterian Church, and possessed the qualities of a finely cultured Christian lady. From her Jacob, one of the latest born of a large family, derived chiefly those qualities which so strongly marked his character. He was the subject of deep religious conviction in his tenth year, and became, as he grew older, a diligent reader of the Bible. He dated his conversion to his seventeenth year, but did not form a connection with any church until



he was in his twenty-first year, when he joined the United Brethren Church. His father possessed no property, was by trade a mason, and made several removals during his life. Blindness seems to have been a misfortune of the family, both the parents and some of the children losing their vision as life advanced. The father became blind some six years before his death, and the mother fourteen years. Bishop Markwood inherited the tendency, and was nearly blind for about a year before his death. Had he lived to old age, it is probable that he would have walked many years in darkness.

As were others of the family, Jacob was early left to make his own living. At thirteen he found employment in a woolen and carding mill, remaining for three years. At sixteen he was employed by two older brothers, in the same business, on Green Spring River, in Frederick County, Virginia. Here he learned all the arts, as then understood, connected with the woolen factory, and became an expert weaver. Here he was accustomed to keep the Bible on the loom before him, so that he could glance at it in favorable moments, and gather portions of its wealth into his mind.

In the year 1837 he received a license to exhort, and within the same year also a license to preach, his credentials being signed by William R. Rhinehart, then a presiding elder in the Virginia Conference. The following year, in 1838, he became a member of the conference, and at once entered into the itinerant work, and upon that brilliant career which marked him as one of the foremost preachers of his time. After five years of service as a circuit and stationed preacher, he was elected presiding elder, serving in this office with the greatest acceptability. In this relation most of his time was passed, greatly to the edification of the Church in Virginia, with but little

interruption, until the General Conference, in 1861, called him to become a shepherd over a wider field. He served as a bishop for eight years, acquiring the greatest popularity with ministers and people, and would doubtless have been continued in the office had not severe and settled affliction disabled him for further service in a field whose labors so severely test the strongest constitutions.

Bishop Markwood was of rather slight figure, not over five feet and seven or eight inches in height, and of erect and elegant carriage. He was quite dark in complexion, with strongly outlined face and head. His black hair fell in heavy masses about his head. His disposition is perhaps difficult to describe. He was genial, polite, courteous in the best sense, full of the gentlest kindness, generous without limit. But this generous nature was capable of being profoundly stirred in rebuking iniquity. When dealing with the slavery question, with the liquor traffic, or other evils that laid claim to respectability, he was capable of pouring out a very deluge of fire. The stately Wendell Phillips, that master of the oratory of invective, was scarcely able to give utterance to such a scathing storm of wrath as Bishop Markwood sometimes did when dealing with these monster evils.

In his preaching the bishop was a master. His diction was copious, his utterance rapid and warm, and his power to reach every passion and impulse of the heart rarely surpassed. He gave careful attention to the preparation of his sermons, but did not build them up artificially according to the usual laws for sermon-making. He sought to fill his mind and heart thoroughly with his subject, and then trusted much to the inspiration of the occasion for the forms of utterance—a method very safe for him, but not to be generally commended for imitation.

Unhappily for this gifted man, he paid slight regard

to the laws of health. He traveled with equal willingness by day or night, in the saddle in his earlier years, or on the train in the later, thus depriving himself of the rest which his impulsive nature so greatly needed for proper recuperation. It was not an unusual thing for him to be all night in the saddle in order to reach distant appointments when he served as presiding elder in Virginia, and in his long trips on his Western districts as bishop he was equally reckless of the claims of his physical nature. The nervous exhaustion which gradually brought on the final crisis, was largely due to excesses in preaching and travel.

In the War of the Rebellion he was compelled early to seek a home in the North, his fiery arraignment of the movements leading to secession inviting against him the unfavorable attention of the Confederate authorities. The sum of a thousand dollars was offered for his apprehension, but he had found a safe asylum with friends in the North. The bishop's home was without children, and his wife, whom many remember as a lady of beautiful Christian character and accomplishments, came north with him. She afterward accompanied him frequently in his travels on his districts, being everywhere received as a welcome guest.

His eight years of service as a bishop closed in May, 1869, and after much painful affliction his earthly career closed on January 22, 1873. He died at the home of his father-in-law, at Luray, in Page County, Virginia, aged fifty-seven years and twenty-seven days. Rev. G. W. Statton, D.D., preached an appropriate funeral discourse. His remains sleep in the cemetery at Luray, and those of his wife, whose death occurred December 3, 1886, rest by his side. On a marble shaft marking the place where he is buried are inscribed his last words: "My work is done; the Lord has no more work for me to do."

*3. Daniel Shuck.*

The men whose names have up to this time come into prominent mention in these pages have all passed on into the heavenly world. Others who are yet living must now be introduced, and these must be spoken of with more reserve, and generally more briefly.

Among those whom the General Conference has honored with its confidence is Ex-Bishop Daniel Shuck, of the Indiana Annual Conference, who was elected to this high office at the session in Westerville, Ohio, in 1861. At that time the work on the Pacific Coast was rising into importance, and the conference decided to form it into a missionary district, with a resident bishop to superintend it. Mr. Shuck was then in the prime of young and vigorous life. He was full of religious zeal and of the missionary fervor which the recent organization of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society had kindled in the hearts of many, and it was a most fit selection when the General Conference laid its hands upon him for that work. He shrank at first from the responsibility involved, but gave his consent to go. Returning to New Albany, Indiana, to complete his year of service there as pastor, he meanwhile made preparation for the journey. When the time came for his departure, the emergencies of the Civil War, which had then begun in earnest, placed an embargo upon his going, and it was not until March, 1864, that he reached Sacramento City. There being then no trans-continental railroad, the journey was made by New York, Aspinwall, and Panama.

His work as a Coast bishop in those days was beset with many difficulties, on account of the long trips over mountainous countries. Especially difficult was the overland journey to Oregon and return. Once, on the return, he was set upon by robbers. A display of revolvers and



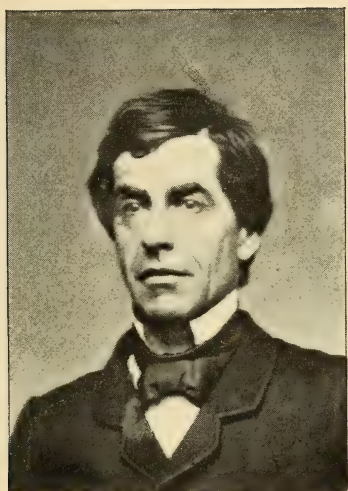
ugly-looking knives, pockets emptied, the bishop tied to a tree, while Mrs. Shuck was being searched and their trunk pilfered of clothing and money, were some of the incidents of the experience. Their persons were not harmed, and they went on their way rejoicing that life was spared, but they felt that as they had before been "in perils of waters," so now they had also been "in perils of robbers."

The General Conference of 1865 reëlected Bishop Shuck, though he was not present at the session, having been on his district only a little over a year, and the distance being so great. The conference of 1869, at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, dissolved the Coast District, deciding that the conferences there should be visited by the bishops of the general work alternately. Bishop Shuck was in attendance at this conference, but some time afterward returned to the Coast, having resolved to spend the remainder of his life among the people there. He continued to serve the Church with great faithfulness in various relations, as presiding elder, circuit and stationed preacher, evangelist, or missionary. Several years ago the severities of hard service began to tell upon his vigorous constitution, and his voice entirely failed him. That trouble is now chiefly removed, and he rejoices in being able sometimes, though now seventy years old, to preach as often as three times on a Sabbath. His wife, who so long endured with him the hardships of pioneer life, is still by his side, and they have just passed the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage.

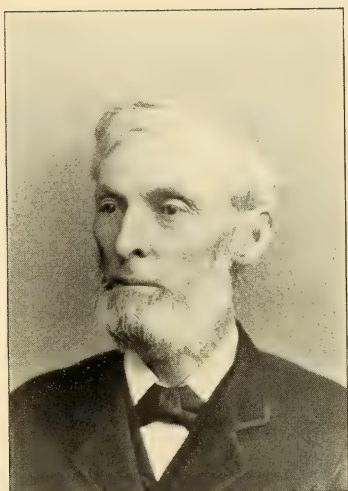
Ex-Bishop Shuck joined the Indiana Conference at the age of about seventeen, in 1844, and has been in the ministry about fifty-three years. He became interested in the cause of education, assisted in locating Union Biblical Seminary, and has been one of the chief supporters of San Joaquin Valley College.

On the subject of legislation relating to secret societies, he stood for the Discipline as from time to time amended. But when the final crisis came, he remained loyal to the Church, deeming the preservation of the Church an object more to be desired than stubborn adherence to a principle which the great body of its people had ceased to support.

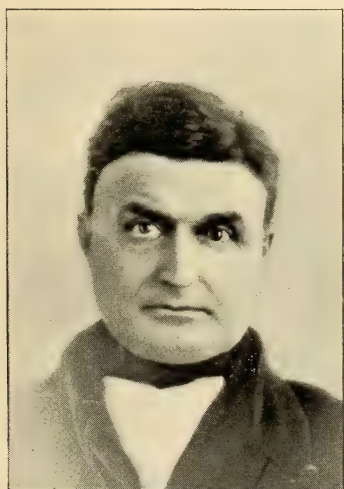
He resides now in Sacramento City, California, and rejoices in any labor that he is able to perform for the Master whom he has so long served, and in the prosperity of the Church to which the toil of his life has been given.



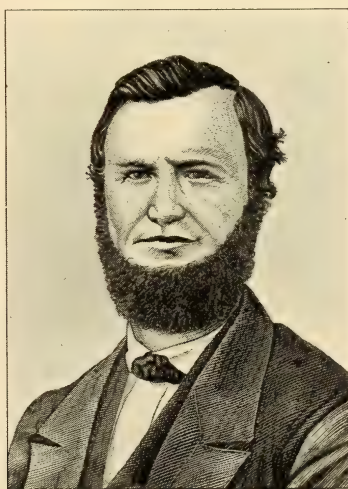
JACOB MARKWOOD.



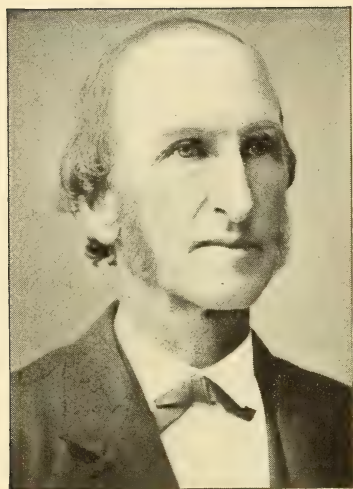
JOHN DICKSON.



WILLIAM R. RHINEHART.



JOHN C. BRIGHT.



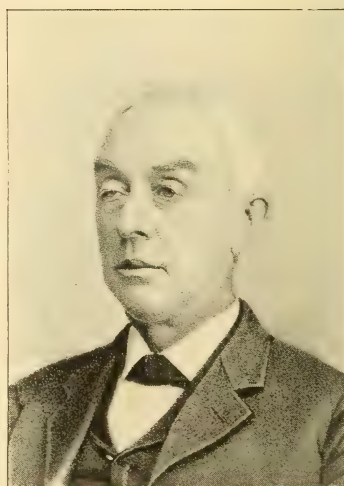
SOLOMON VONNIEDA.



WILLIAM MITTENDORF.



DAVID L. RIKE.



JACOB HOKE.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCES OF 1865-1881

#### I. A PERIOD OF PROGRESS.

THE time from 1865 to 1885 was in a marked degree distinguished as a period of development. Events having a most important bearing on the progress of the Church transpired between these dates. A non-progressive spirit, too, asserted itself, for a time with increasing intensity, tending to restrict the life of the Church within narrower limits, to be met, however, by that strong reaction which made possible the culmination of 1885, and made that one of the truly historic years of the Church. The period was one of steady growth in the membership and the various institutions of the Church. The field of operations was rapidly enlarged in the newer districts of the West. The Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society proved the value of its service by increasing activities, aiding in the organization and support of a number of new conferences, so that the thirty-two conferences of 1865 had become forty-eight in 1885. The membership of the Church also was nearly doubled within this period, advancing from 89,811 to 173,265.

Several important branches of church work also were organized in such manner as to come definitely under the care of the General Conference. The first of these was the General Sunday-School Board, originally called Sunday-School Association, formed by the conference of 1865. Next followed Union Biblical Seminary, the preliminary

steps for its founding being taken by the conference of 1869. After this followed the Woman's Missionary Association, organized independently, but receiving the official recognition of the General Conference. This association was formed in 1875, and it was an incident of very special interest when, at the General Conference of 1877, at Westfield, Illinois, Mrs. D. L. Rike, as a representative of the woman's board, presented in an excellent address the greetings of the association. The conference of 1869 organized a general Board of Education, which should have oversight of all the educational work of the Church. This board has accomplished a valuable service in this important field. This conference also organized the Church-Erection Society, laying the foundations of a department of work which has already proved of much service in its particular field, and will accomplish far greater work in the future. In the publishing department great advance was made. In 1865 the Publishing House, though showing assets amounting to over sixty thousand dollars, was embarrassed with liabilities reaching so near to an equal amount that a sale of the House could not have satisfied the claims against it. In 1885 the net assets above all liabilities were considerably more than two hundred thousand dollars. This material progress, however, is to be regarded only as an index suggesting the higher gains to the Church accomplished through the numerous publications issued from its presses. Each of these special departments of work will be found spoken of farther on in this volume.

## II. PRO RATA REPRESENTATION.

Several questions of church polity were much agitated through this period. Among the most important of these were those relating to the ratio of representation in the

General Conference, and to lay representation or lay delegation in the General and annual conferences. The earliest basis of representation in the General Conference had no reference to annual-conference districts. By the consent, or request, of the old, or original, conference in the East, the Miami Annual Conference arranged the basis for representation for the first General Conference, held in 1815. The Church was divided into ten districts, each district to be entitled to two delegates. The districts of the presiding elders seem to have furnished, in part, at least, the basis for the division into the ten districts. This arrangement seems to have placed it within the power of any annual conference to secure for itself a larger representation in the General Conference by increasing the number of its presiding-elders' districts. At any rate, in the General Conference of 1833 some of the Western conferences appear to have gained material advantage over those in the East. But this advantage, with their power to outvote their Eastern brethren, they appear to have surrendered gracefully, for in the conference succeeding, that of 1837, representation was upon an even plane, each of the eight conferences then existing having two delegates on the floor. The ratio of representation was one of the subjects considered by this body, and it was evidently the judgment of the majority that the arrangement was unfair to the larger conferences. The proof of this is in the fact that, in framing the Constitution which they approved and placed before the Church, they adopted the principle of *pro rata* representation. The basis proposed was equitable, and was very clearly expressed in the following, in Section 3 of Article I.:

The number of delegates from each conference district shall not exceed one for every five hundred members. But should it so happen that a conference would be formed in a territory not having five

hundred members within its district, that conference shall nevertheless have one delegate to represent its members in General Conference.

The General Conference of 1841 was evidently not of the same mind with that of 1837. In framing the Constitution which was then adopted, and by which the Church was governed until 1889, the conference left out the *pro rata* feature, but placed a clause in the body of the Discipline providing for a representation of three delegates from each annual conference. It was early felt that an arrangement which gave to five hundred or a less number of members in a mission conference as much power in the law-making body of the Church as was possessed by five thousand or ten thousand in an older conference was gravely unjust, and earnest efforts were from time to time made to secure a more equitable representation. The first movement in this direction was in the General Conference of 1857, upon a motion introduced by the younger Bishop Kumler favoring *pro rata* representation. The motion was voted down, as were all subsequent efforts during the successive General Conferences until 1881. The General Conference of that year adopted a compromise measure, in which the *pro rata* principle was partially recognized. The measure gave to the smallest annual conference no less than two, and to the largest no more than four, delegates.

### III. LAY REPRESENTATION.

Originally the General and annual conferences of the Church were composed of the ministerial class alone. This composition of the conferences grew naturally out of the type of its early life. At the "great meetings" the ministers held their councils and decided what places were to be visited and who among them were to make the



visits or tours determined upon. Later, when these councils became organized conference meetings, they still consisted of the ministers only, and the General Conference, when it was organized, took on the same type. This was in a period when little was thought of except building up the immediate spiritual interests of the people. There was no missionary society, no colleges or seminaries, no publishing house, and not very much building of church-houses. There was but little that required immediate counsel with the laity. Most of the ministers received no salaries, and others so little that even the office of steward was for a number of years unknown. On the material side of building up the Church, in which it would be supposed that the laity were especially interested, there was so little done that the general councils might very well be composed of ministers only. With the springing up of the various departments of church work, these conditions changed, and there began to be a goodly number, both in the ministry and in the laity, who believed that the laity should bear a part in the business of both the General and the annual conferences. As related to the financial side of the question, intelligent laymen frequently made the just complaint that the laity were expected to contribute the money for carrying forward the enterprises of the Church and were denied a voice in determining how the money should be spent.

There was no serious barrier in the Constitution or Rules of Discipline of the Church to forbid laymen becoming members of the annual conferences. All that was needed was for the General Conference to enact the necessary legislation amending the provisions under which annual conferences were formed. In regard to the General Conference the case was different. Here the Constitution of

1841,<sup>1</sup> as has been already seen, interposed an obstacle which no General Conference in its own power could overcome.

The provision which vested all ecclesiastical power in the ministry alone must of necessity be changed before the laity could share this prerogative with the clergy; and the provision which was intended to make alteration or amendment difficult by requiring the approval of a two-thirds vote of the entire Church, did this very effectually. Under these conditions the friends of lay delegation had a problem of unusual difficulty to meet. All efforts in the direction of securing lay delegation must contemplate, first, the favor of a majority in the General Conference, composed of ministers only, many of whom believed that special divine prerogatives to rule as well as to shepherd the Church were committed to the ministry; and, secondly, they must secure the approving vote of the entire Church on an amendment to the Constitution.

The first well-directed effort to secure the necessary legislation for bringing such an amendment before the Church for its approval was made in the General Conference of 1869. A committee on lay representation was appointed as one of the standing committees of the conference. An excellent report, providing for an amendment to the Constitution and for the requisite legislation to take the vote of the people, was presented. It was ably defended before the conference, but voted down by the decisive majority of fifty-five against thirty-two. But it would be unjust to this conference to regard it as non-progressive on this account, since it was this body which authorized the founding of a theological seminary and created the Church-Erection Society.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 305.

In the quadrennium following the conference of 1869 a decided advance in the sentiment of the Church on this subject was made. In the conference of 1873, held at Dayton, Ohio, the subject was again introduced. A report similar to that defeated in 1869, but fuller and more explicit in its provisions, was presented and adopted. A question then arising in regard to the construction to be placed upon Article IV. of the Constitution, a resolution was adopted referring the decision to the Board of Bishops. The question related to the meaning of the phrase "unless by request of two-thirds of the whole society." The resolution was as follows :

*Resolved*, That the explicit rendering of Article IV. of the Constitution be submitted to the Board of Bishops, and that they be instructed to publish the same in the *Religious Telescope*.

The bishops took the matter under advisement at a regular meeting subsequent to the adjournment of the conference. Being four in number, their vote upon the main question involved was a tie. In consequence, the amendments were not submitted to the people, the will of the General Conference was defeated, and lay representation was again deferred.

These repeated failures, though disappointing, did not dishearten the friends of lay representation. In the conference of 1877 the subject was again introduced, and a paper was adopted empowering the annual conferences, when so desiring, to adopt lay representation in their sessions, each charge in any conference to be entitled to one delegate. The lay delegates so admitted to membership were to have all the privileges of the ministers, except the power to vote on the reception or expulsion of preachers, the passing of licentiates in the course of reading, and the election of presiding elders. Thus an important advance step was gained. But lay representation

in the General Conference was to be still further delayed. In the conference of 1881 a report providing for *pro rata* representation was adopted, but the same report also recommended that the question of lay representation in the General Conference be for the present deferred. This part of the report was also adopted, and lay representation in that body was not secured until, by the action of the General Conference of 1885, and the vote of the entire Church following, the Constitution was amended so as to open the way for its introduction.

#### IV. THE SECRET-SOCIETY QUESTION.

The secret-society question received a large amount of attention during the period from 1865 to 1885. During a large part of this time it became, indeed, the dominating question of the Church. The columns of the *Religious Telescope* teemed with articles on this subject; in the successive sessions of the General Conference entire days, sometimes several days, were given to its discussion, often in heated debate; and most, perhaps all, of the annual conferences at each yearly session passed some form of resolutions, either supporting the legislation of the General Conference, or advising more moderate measures. The tendency was steadily toward a more intense radicalism, until the very excesses to which writing, speaking, legislation, and administration were carried began to bring about a strong reaction.

There is no doubt that the fathers of the Church held a sentiment adverse to secret societies, or rather to the Masonic order, the one society best known to them. Bishop Otterbein, like Mr. Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, and many other leaders of Christian thought of that day, looked with disfavor upon this order. Bishop Boehm was born and brought up in a church which, like



the Society of Friends, discountenanced all oaths, including those administered in the courts, and was therefore all the more opposed to oaths not required by civil law. The followers of these eminent leaders naturally adopted their views, and opposition to secret societies finally found expression in the Book of Discipline, and in 1841 in the Constitution then adopted. The first legislation of the Church on the subject was in 1829, at a time when the sentiment of the country, for special reasons, was widely and very strongly aroused against the Masonic order. The legislation by the General Conference of that year was specifically against Masonry. This was sixteen years after the death of Bishop Otterbein, and while his personal sentiment was adverse to Masonry he never framed it into a rule for the government of the Church.

In the year 1868 a national convention of men opposed to secret societies was held in the city of Pittsburg. Several persons prominently connected with the United Brethren Church were present as members, and participated in its proceedings. Among the steps taken by the convention was that of recommending the publication of a weekly periodical which should be especially devoted to opposition to secret societies. This paper found a considerable circulation among the people of the United Brethren Church, and aided much in kindling the spirit of intense radicalism which subsequently found so strong a development in the Church. On the approach of the General Conference of 1869, it advised the United Brethren to look carefully to its officials connected with the Publishing House. The *Religious Telescope* at that time was conducted on a plane of moderation, but in firm disapproval of secret societies, and in support of the position held by the Church. But its tone was not sufficiently radical to meet the extreme views

of some on the question. In the conference of 1869 and in several succeeding conferences the subject was made an issue in the election of some of the general officers—in some cases successful, in others not. The columns of the *Religious Telescope*, it was thought, should be especially guarded, and for eight years, from 1869 to 1877, the paper was placed under the most vigilant radical supervision. The very intensity of its radicalism began in time to react upon itself, and many earnest supporters of the church law on secrecy desired a change in the control of the paper, and a new editor, of more moderate views, was chosen, to give a truer expression of the sentiment of the Church.

The rule in the Discipline against connection with secret societies was the bone of contention, the radical portion of the General Conferences seeking from time to time to increase its severity, while the liberals sought to soften or modify its provisions. The yeas and nays on the changes proposed in the successive conferences are the best index of the gradually changing sentiment as it advanced from the position of ultraism to a more liberal attitude. In the conference at Westerville, Ohio, in 1861, the vote on the final adoption of the rule as then amended stood sixty-eight yeas to five nays, one of these being afterward changed to yea. In the minutes for 1865 the yeas and nays are not recorded. In the conference at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, in 1869, the proportion was seventy-two for adoption to twenty-five against, the ratio being in the first instance about seventeen to one, and in the second not quite three to one. The main vote in the conference of 1873, at Dayton, Ohio, after the *Religious Telescope* had been for four years under radical control, was eighty-two yeas to twenty-two nays, a gain to the radical side, and a loss to the liberal. In the conference of 1877 the vote

stood seventy to thirty-one, a loss to the radical side and a gain to the liberal. In 1881 a test vote stood sixty-eight radical to fifty-seven liberal, and in 1885 liberal sentiment had so far advanced as to make possible the steps taken for the amendment of the Constitution. A greatly modified rule on secret societies, proposed by the liberals, was adopted by a vote of seventy-six to thirty-eight, six not voting, and the measure providing for the appointment of a Commission for the amendment of the Constitution and revision of the Confession of Faith was carried by the decisive majority of seventy-eight in favor to forty-two against. The number of delegates, with the bishops included, was one hundred and twenty, the bishops in each instance voting.

#### V. PERSONAL NOTES.

##### 1. *Jonathan Weaver, D.D.*

The General Conference never made a wiser selection for the office of bishop than it did at its session of 1865, when it laid upon Jonathan Weaver this high responsibility. For nearly thirty-two years he has gone in and out before the Church, performing for it service in all its various fields, except in the foreign missionary districts, with a degree of success and acceptability not surpassed in its history.

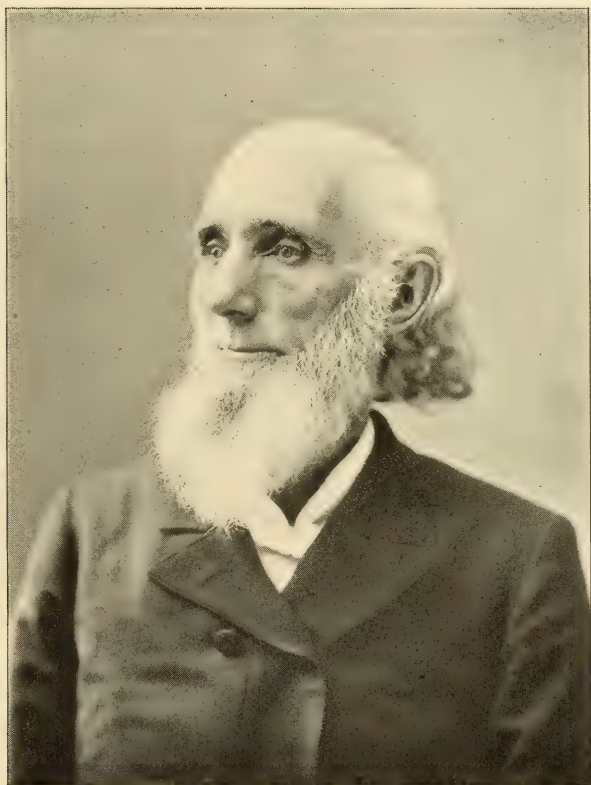
Bishop Weaver was born in Carroll County, Ohio, on March 23, 1824, and was the youngest of a family of twelve—six sons and six daughters. His educational advantages were limited, being such as were found in the common schools of that day, with the addition of attendance at a Presbyterian academy, or high school, for a short period. It has always been a source of regret to him that he did not have the advantage of a thorough training in

the schools. But at that time the Church did not have any denominational schools, and the ministers of his conference mostly were not in favor of college-trained preachers. So he entered the field with such preparation as he had, and sought by reading and study to make up in part what he lacked at the beginning.

His religious convictions go back to an early date. His conversion occurred at a camp-meeting in the summer of 1841, when he was seventeen years of age. At nineteen he was chosen a class-leader, and at twenty was given license to exhort. With this license he was pressed to assist on a circuit for a time. In 1847, at the age of twenty-three, he joined the Muskingum Conference, and so entered upon the distinguished career which awaited him. His first charge, in the region bordering upon Lake Erie, included seventeen appointments. He increased this number to twenty-three within the year, and had about eighty accessions to the Church. He succeeded well as a revivalist, his accessions on each of two other charges numbering a hundred and upward within a year. In 1848 he was ordained by Bishop Glossbrenner. In 1851, after four years' work on circuits, he was chosen presiding elder, and in 1857 he was a delegate to the General Conference at Cincinnati.

During these years he was gradually rising in popularity as a preacher. This fact, added to his urbane and winning manner, led the trustees of Otterbein University to seek his services as a soliciting agent for that institution. His cordial and hearty bearing, with his eloquence in the pulpit, won for him a welcome wherever he went, and he served in this relation for eight years. The General Conference of 1861, at Westerville, Ohio, elected him bishop for the Pacific Coast. He declined this responsibility, preferring to remain in the service of the college.





JONATHAN WEAVER.



The year 1865 brought the crisis which fixed his destiny for the rest of his life. The General Conference of that year was held in the chapel of Western College, then located at Western, Iowa. An editor of the *Religious Telescope* was to be chosen, and his friends rallied strongly to his support for the position. He had written much for its columns, always in a pleasing and attractive style. This, added to his wide popularity as a preacher, and the earnest advocacy of his supporters, seemed to make his election a foregone conclusion; but when the ballots were counted, he was not elected. The General Conference then did a much wiser thing, when, almost immediately after, it elected him to the office of bishop. What he became as a bishop all the Church knows.

As a presiding officer over the General or annual conferences he has been eminently successful. His knowledge of parliamentary law, his grasp upon conference business through all its entanglements, his clear statement of motions or of decisions of questions of order, his perfect poise when the floor was somewhat stormy, and his occasional playfulness withal, have marked him as one of the ablest masters of assemblies.

On some questions of church polity which occasioned agitation, he long ago proved himself to be progressive by giving support, cautious for a time, to the movements which looked toward change. On the attitude of the Church toward secret societies, he became early a semi-liberal, and as he saw in his wide experience the results of extreme legislation he gradually came to favor strongly the adoption of more moderate measures, and finally was ready to stand in the front rank of the movement which gave to the Church its revised Constitution. In the progress of this change his counsels, as in all other things, were moderate. He has never been ready to support sudden or

violent measures, but has rather pursued the course which seemed to promise the greater safety.

But it is in his character as a preacher that Bishop Weaver has won in greatest degree the affections of the Church. Here his style is easy, clear, luminous, strong, often gentle and tender, frequently rising to majesty. It is not given to many men to be his equals in the pulpit. The simplicity of his style, while justly challenging the approbation of the learned and wise, wins also the favor of childhood. Of this the following is an interesting illustration: Some years ago, in the city of Dayton, the pulpit of one of the leading Presbyterian churches was vacant for a time, and the bishop was engaged to fill it when his duties permitted. An officer in the church related that one Sunday morning at the breakfast table his little daughter, a child of eight, had asked him who was going to preach that day. On being told that Bishop Weaver would preach, she exclaimed, gleefully: "Oh, then I am going to stay for church. I like to hear him preach. I can understand everything he says." The sermon was somewhat lengthy that day, and when the gentleman had returned home he asked his daughter whether she did not get tired with the bishop's long sermon. She replied, "Oh, no, papa, the sermon was not at all long." The bishop on that day was in one of his best moods, and the length of the sermon was precisely one hour and thirteen minutes. It would be difficult, perhaps, to give higher praise to a sermon than such a tribute by a little child.

Some years ago the bishop's strength began to be broken through long-continued and excessive labors, and the General Conference of 1893 decided to release him from active duties except such as he might feel himself able to perform. He was accordingly elected bishop *emeritus*, in which relation he now continues. With his strength



thus weakened he has been aging perhaps somewhat prematurely, and presents now quite a venerable appearance. His tall form, equaling in height that of Abraham Lincoln, whom in some other respects he has been thought to resemble, begins to be slightly bent, and his heavy white locks and beard betoken rather more years than the calendar measures. But he is serene and happy in spirit, happy especially over the prosperity of the Church for whose welfare he has toiled so long. It is a source of great comfort to him that the Church is now about safely through with the troublesome conflict of the recent years, in which he himself was called to take so large a part for her defense, and that the promise of a bright future now everywhere illumines the horizon.

Bishop Weaver has been a free contributor to the literature of the Church. For forty years he has written frequently for its various periodicals, and a number of books and pamphlets have appeared from his pen. Among these are "Discourses on the Resurrection," "Divine Providence," "Ministerial Salary," "Universal Restoration," and "A Practical Comment on the Confession of Faith." He is also the editor of a theological work entitled "Christian Doctrine," a symposium contributed to by thirty-seven writers selected by himself.

Bishop Weaver's home for a number of years past has been in the city of Dayton, where he enjoys the high regard of the people of all denominations. He still makes long journeys to preside over such annual conferences as are allotted to him in the sessions of the episcopal board, and preaches frequently in Dayton and elsewhere as his strength permits. He abides in strong hope of standing in due time in the presence of the Master whom he has served through so many years.

*2. John Dickson, D.D.*

Through a period of twenty-four years the name of John Dickson, D.D., appeared as one of the bishops of the Church, his service commencing in May, 1869, and closing in 1893. Bishop Dickson was born near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, on June 15, 1820. His father was of Scotch-Irish, and his mother of English, ancestry. The family home was on a farm, and until he was about seventeen years of age his life was spent in the usual farm employments, with a short term at the common school during the winter season. The advantages afforded by the usual common school of that day were very limited, and he acquired later, in diligent private study, the close and accurate mental training which gave character to his preaching through life. He entered quite early upon the profession of a teacher, and taught the usual winter term, with an added term in the spring.

His conversion occurred in November, 1843, under the ministry of Rev. J. C. Smith, then a young man beginning his work, but afterward rising into prominence as a minister. He was soon after this called upon to open meetings, and not long afterward the license to exhort, more customary in those days than now, was given him, and then a license to preach. His conversion took place in the "Old Red School-house," some eight miles southwest from Chambersburg, a place sometimes called the "soul factory," from the frequency of the revivals which took place there. He took his first charge as a preacher in March, 1846, at a conference in Lancaster County, the presiding officer being Bishop Glossbrenner, then in the first year of his service as bishop. In 1847 he joined the conference, and three years later, in 1850, he was ordained as an elder by Bishop Erb at a session of the conference at York.

During the years following, up to May, 1869, he per-

formed diligently the duties of an itinerant minister, being in charge of circuits or stations, or in the office of presiding elder. Meanwhile, he gave much attention to study and writing, becoming a frequent contributor to the columns of the *Religious Telescope*. During part of the quadrennium from 1865 to 1869 he was one of several editorial contributors to the paper. So well recognized were the attainments he had made that his name was at one time proposed for president of Mount Pleasant College, before the consolidation of that institution with Otterbein University. He modestly declined this honor, and urged the election of Alexander Owen. His counsel was wisely followed. Previous to the first appointment of John Lawrence as editor of the *Religious Telescope*, in 1850, his name was considered by the trustees of the Publishing House for that position, but he declined to be a candidate.

The General Conference of 1869, held at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, not far from his own home, chose him for the responsible office of bishop, and reëlections followed at each conference until 1893. He performed the duties of this trust with unflagging diligence, giving attention faithfully to every minute detail. As a presiding officer, whether over the General Conference or the annual conferences, he was clear, accurate, and strong, so that the progress of business was always safe in his hands. He had a complete grasp of parliamentary law, and kept full control over the intricacies, especially of General Conference business, and a doubt as to the correctness of his rulings was rarely suggested.

As a preacher Bishop Dickson has always been recognized as clear, methodical, and strong, possessing less of the emotional than some, never attempting rhetorical adornment or flights of eloquence, but always instructive and edifying. During his service as a pastor frequent

revivals, some of them of considerable extent, occurred under his ministrations.

On some of the questions which agitated the Church during many years, he was conservative, and for a long time was numbered with the radical party. His early training had taught him to regard the attitude of the Church as wise and right, and he was slow to come to any material change of sentiments. He doubted the wisdom of the appointing of the Church Commission by the General Conference of 1885, and, while he was by virtue of his office as bishop a member of it, he chose not to take part in its deliberations, fearing that the entire movement would result in harm to the Church. He was thoroughly conscientious in this, and frankly stated his position in a letter to the Commission. He was in no sympathy with those who, when they were no longer able to control, began to prepare the way for the disruption of the Church, as all his subsequent course demonstrated. When the final crisis came, he was found with Weaver and Castle and Kephart, and with all who adhered loyally to the Church; and during the years which followed, his pen was frequently employed in clearing up doubts which had been raised in the minds of many in the Church through representations designed to place it in a false position. His activity in this respect proved of great service in holding to the Church many whom it was sought to mislead by alleging that the Church had nullified its own Constitution, cast aside its Confession of Faith, and adopted other instruments in their stead.

In years Bishop Dickson has now advanced well toward the sunset, being in the seventy-seventh year of his age, but he has as yet suffered little abatement of strength. His contributions for the church periodicals are clear and vigorous as ever, and he preaches almost constantly with



undiminished acceptability. He resides in his old home in Chambersburg in quiet contentment, the wife of his youth still sitting at his side, and abides firm in the faith of the gospel of Christ, which he has so long proclaimed.

### 3. *Nicholas Castle, D.D.*

Twenty years ago this coming May, Bishop Castle was elected to a seat in the episcopal board. He was born in Elkhart County, Indiana, on October 4, 1837, and is now in the sixtieth year of his age. His early life was passed in poverty as to worldly circumstances. His father died when he was about two years old, and his mother, gentle, delicate, toiling to rear her orphan family, long an invalid, was released from suffering when he was but thirteen. He inherited a frail constitution, and was a delicate child, and nobody needed a boy who was not rugged enough to perform substantial labor on the farm. He drifted awhile, until at fifteen he found a home, in which he remained until he attained his majority, and, indeed, until he entered upon the work of the ministry. Three months of attendance at school each year was one of the conditions of his stay with this farmer, and the terms of the contract were carefully kept. But so defective was the system of teaching in those days in the newer parts of the country that the advantages secured were comparatively meager.

His conversion was attended with marked power, so as to leave the question of a true religious experience permanently settled in his mind. His call to the ministry followed soon after, expressing itself to his own mind and to the minds of others in the conviction that God intended him for the sacred office. With the greatest timidity and fear he began, at the urgency of his friends, to speak in public, and when the annual session of the St. Joseph Conference was approaching he arranged to attend it.

The opening day of the session, September 23, 1858, found him present as an applicant for license to preach. The conference was held at Warsaw, Indiana, and Bishop L. Davis presided. To his surprise,—for it was more than he had allowed himself to expect,—the conference accepted him, and he was assigned to the Warsaw Circuit, a field with twenty-four appointments, all of which must be met every four weeks. He was ordained by Bishop Markwood on October 14, 1861. For a little over eighteen years, until May, 1877, he served in various relations the St. Joseph Conference, a portion of the time as presiding elder.

The General Conference of May, 1877, held in Westfield, Illinois, brought him new and most unexpected duties in the Church. The death of Bishop David Edwards had left an important vacancy to be filled, and the General Conference had decided to strengthen the episcopal service, so that there were two bishops to be elected. Mr. Castle was one of those who were chosen. The announcement of the choice came upon him with overwhelming power, and his sense of unfitness for the high responsibilities involved led him to so far shrink from accepting the office that he well-nigh determined upon a resignation. If any accusation of seeking for office could ever be laid justly against any one, such could never be said of Bishop Castle. He finally, after much fervent prayer, decided to submit to what seemed to be an expression of the Divine will. "I do not know what it means," he said, "but God shall be his own interpreter." The committee to station the bishops assigned him to the Pacific Coast. This field was an exceedingly difficult one to serve, owing to the long distances that must be traveled, many of the journeys lying across almost pathless mountains, and being beset with a variety of perils. For eight years Bishop Castle served

on the Coast District, gaining an experience, though at hard cost, which has proved valuable to him ever since. It was during this period that he was called to part with his first wife, a lady of the noblest type of beautiful Christian womanhood, who had faithfully shared his toils since the second year of his work in the ministry. Since 1885 his residence has been at Elkhart, Indiana, near the place of his birth, and his service has been at large throughout the Church upon the plan of episcopal visitation adopted by the General Conference of that year.

As a presiding officer over the General and annual conferences Bishop Castle takes high rank with his brethren of the board of superintendents. As a preacher he impresses his hearers with the depth of his sincerity and the thoroughness of his own experience. His imagination is warm and vivid, so that descriptive passages in his sermons often take on a poetic cast, and his utterance frequently rises into the truest eloquence. His extreme sensitiveness and timidity, which he even now finds it often difficult to hold in abeyance, usually disappear as his sermon advances, and he becomes a master of the best forms of speech. In the pulpit and everywhere else he makes the impression of one devoutly sincere as a Christian, and as holding daily communion with God. His health is often delicate, yet God has enabled him to render a very large amount of service to the Church.

#### 4. *Milton Wright, D.D.*

Ex-Bishop Milton Wright was born on November 17, 1828, in Rush County, Indiana. He dates his conversion in 1843, and he became a member of the White River Conference in 1853. He spent a busy life in the itinerant work prior to his being called into official service. A part of this time he was employed as a missionary in Oregon.

The rest was chiefly given to the White River Conference, in the various relations of circuit preacher, stationed pastor, or presiding elder. He was in all these duties a faithful and conscientious worker, avoiding no hardships that might be in store for the itinerant in the home fields, or for the missionary on the frontier. A short time was spent in teaching.

He began early to give attention to the anti-secret-society movement, attending the convention of the national association opposed to secret orders at Pittsburg, in 1868, and other conventions of the same organization in subsequent years. His strong convictions on this subject, and the active interest taken in opposing secret societies, led to his election as editor of the *Religious Telescope* by the General Conference of 1869, the first conference in which this question was made an issue in an election. He was reëlected in 1873, with Rev. W. O. Tobey, a man of very pronounced convictions on the same subject, as joint editor. During the eight years of his incumbency the columns of the *Religious Telescope* were intensely radical.

In 1877 he was elected to the office of bishop. The radicals were at that time so greatly in the majority that they could easily elect any one whom they chose. There was, nevertheless, a considerable number of delegates who, while firmly opposed to secret orders, and supporting the prohibitive measures adopted from time to time by the General Conference, desired a somewhat milder administration in the *Religious Telescope*. The choice of editor did not lie between the radicals and liberals, but between the radical candidates. Rev. J. W. Hott, now Bishop Hott, who at that time was regarded as a man of moderate views, was chosen. Bishop Wright served four years on the West Mississippi District, and at the General Conference of 1881 was not reëlected. In 1885 he was again elected, for the Pacific Coast District.



The conference of 1885 having taken the initiatory measures for amending the Constitution of the Church and for the revision of the Confession of Faith, Bishop Wright opposed the action, with all the steps necessarily following, exerting against it all the influence of his official position, and preparing, with others, the way for the secession which followed at the conference of 1889. At this conference his connection with the Church ceased. All his previous career marks him as a laborious, earnest, and plodding worker, faithful to the best interests of the Church as he conceived them to be. He was drawn into a false position, and finally to a most unfortunate step, by an excessive devotion to a single principle and a type of church policy which the great body of the Church had come to regard as untenable.

5. *Ezekiel B. Kephart, D.D., LL.D.*

The men who have been called to the office of bishop in the United Brethren Church have, with few exceptions, been born in humble circumstances, and their earlier lives have been marked by hard struggle against adverse conditions. Among the recent bishops, and those now living, a number have risen to high distinction as preachers and parliamentarians. Their work in the pulpit and as presidents of assemblies has awakened, and has fully merited, the highest admiration. But all their success has been achieved through unflagging industry, joined to a strong faith in God, who directs the destinies of men. To these conditions Bishop Kephart is not an exception.

The bishop was born in Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, on November 6, 1834. His father was of Swiss origin, with a mixture of English, while his mother was partly of Dutch descent. The parents were members of the United Brethren Church, and the father a minister. The

home was a very humble one, situated on the western slope of the Alleghany Mountains. The spirit of true piety ruled in the home, the parents joining together in the effort to bring up their children in the fear of God. The place was frequently visited by other ministers, and protracted meetings were sometimes held there. In this home were brought up three sons who have gained distinction in circles wider than the denomination which they serve, one of them, Dr. I. L. Kephart, being editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and another, Dr. C. J. Kephart, being general secretary for the State Sunday-school work of Pennsylvania. All of the three have served as college presidents.

Bishop Kephart's early educational opportunities were limited. But when, after his conversion, which occurred at the age of seventeen, his impulses began to draw him toward the Christian ministry, he resolved that he would seek an education. After spending a short time in a seminary, he entered Mount Pleasant College, at the age of twenty-three. When that institution was merged into Otterbein University, he, with many of the rest of the students, followed its destinies to that college. Here he graduated first in the scientific and afterward in the classical course, after unavoidable interruptions growing out of financial circumstances. In 1868 he was elected president of Western College. He accepted the position, and remained as head of the college for a period of thirteen years, until the General Conference called for his service in a higher realm. As the head of the college he at once set about elevating its character, both as to the work done by the classes and in discipline. In this he met with success, giving to the institution a higher tone generally than it had ever possessed before. He was strongly impressed with the unfortunate location of the

college, and was instrumental, with others, in effecting its removal to its present excellent place. His success in connection with the college attracted the favorable attention of the General Conference held at Lisbon, Iowa, in 1881, and he was called to the higher service of the episcopal office. Since then he has been three times reelected, so that he is now in his sixteenth year in that office.

As a college president and teacher Bishop Kephart exhibited many of the foremost qualities. His own educational course was achieved under many difficulties, and he could enter into ready sympathy with students who were struggling against adverse circumstances. In teaching he was generous in his attitude toward students, leading them on to investigation for themselves by throwing a genial glow over their work. As a ruler over the college, in the administration of necessary discipline, he was kind and considerate, but inflexible.

As a bishop he has achieved an enviable success. He presides over the conferences, General and annual, with dignified ease, keeping the progress of business well in hand, without liability to confusion. He possesses a clear grasp of parliamentary law, makes his decisions firmly, and business proceeds easily under his direction. The kind geniality of his nature finds frequent expression, and a conference is little liable, even when exciting or irritating questions are under consideration, to drift away from a spirit of pleasant humor. As a member of the episcopal board he is a wise and safe counselor, bearing his full part in deciding the delicate and difficult questions that sometimes come before the board. The first draft of the bishops' quadrennial address before the General Conference of 1885, in which questions affecting most vitally the future of the Church were considered, it is understood was prepared by him. Some features of this address, from the

nature of the subjects to which they relate, must acquire a permanent historic character.

Bishop Kephart, as a capable, broad-minded, large-hearted, genial Christian gentleman, with little of private interests to serve, but keeping the best interests of the Church steadily in view, is greatly esteemed in the responsible station to which he has been called.



## SIXTH PERIOD—1885–1897

### CHAPTER XIX

#### THE NINETEENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1885

##### I. THE REVISION MOVEMENT.

THE period from 1885 to 1889 marks an era of the highest importance in the progressive history of the United Brethren Church. The general tendency of the Church had long been in the direction of a broader life. There was a growing feeling that excellent as were the things of the past, they were in some respects cast in a narrower mold than the exigencies of advancing time required, just as the old divinely appointed Jewish polity, and the church which was established under it, needed in time to enter into broader forms and a freer life. From the beginning the law-making power of the Church was exercised by the ministers only, and when a General Conference was proposed the plans by which it was to be constituted provided for the election of ministers only. When the conference assembled, provision was made for the election of ministers only to future General Conferences. And when, at a later time, a General Conference took it upon itself to make a constitution, the same feature was fixed in the fundamental law of the Church. For a number of years scarcely a question was raised as to the propriety of withholding from the laity all part in the law-making department of the Church. The time had now come when a large majority of the ministers and the great body of the laity favored the sharing of this function with the

laity. In another particular the Constitution of the Church embodied a feature, relating to secret societies, which, it was felt, should be transferred to the field of legislation, to be dealt with by the General Conference according to its judgment, as other subjects from time to time are dealt with.

It was also felt that some essentials of Christian belief which found, in various forms, expression in the body of the Church Discipline should be transferred to their proper position in the Confession of Faith, while it seemed desirable also that certain other doctrines already in the Confession should be partially recast, so as to find a clearer and surer expression. There was no disposition to treat irreverently this excellent utterance of the fathers, a symbol, indeed, quite worthy of a place among the noblest creeds of Christendom. But it was also remembered, that these good men who framed the instrument laid no claims to a divine inspiration in their work ; that they exercised for themselves the power and right of selection, embodying in its statements their conceptions of fundamental religious truth ; and that the Church of the present time possesses the same right to exercise its judgment and to give to that judgment its proper expression, just as the Church of the future will be entitled to think for itself and embody its thought in such forms as, in its aggregate judgment, may seem to be the expression of fixed truth. The exercise of this right is in no way inconsistent with the profoundest reverence and love for those who have gone before.

Before the assembling of the General Conference of 1885 it became apparent, through public and private discussion, that the question of amending the Constitution of the Church and of revising the Confession of Faith would come before that body for consideration, and much interest was felt in advance as to the manner

in which it would be met by the conference. The way for disposition of the question relating to the amendment of the Constitution was fairly opened in the bishops' quadrennial address. In this address it was treated with special reference to the section in the Constitution relating to secret societies. The bishops said :

We need not say to your honorable body that the subject of secret societies has become a most perplexing one to our Zion. This is well known to you all. Also, it is expected of you by the people whom you represent that under the blessing of God you will put this subject to rest and bring peace to the Church by wise regulations. To this end we recommend :

*First.* In that it is admitted that our present Constitution has not been as yet submitted to a vote of the whole society, you determine whether the whole subject under consideration is or is not yet in the hands of the General Conference.

*Second.* Should you determine that it is in your hands, then transfer the whole subject from the realm of constitutional law to the field of legislative enactment, which would be to expunge the whole question from the Constitution and bring it into the field of legislative enactment, to be handled as the Church, through her representatives, may determine from time to time.

*Third.* That you limit the prohibitory feature of your enactment to combinations, secret and open, to which the Church believes a Christian cannot belong.

*Fourth.* Should you decide that this constitutional question is beyond your control, and in the hands of the whole society, then submit the above propositions, properly formulated, to a vote of the whole Church, and let a two-thirds vote of those voting be the authoritative voice of the Church on the subject.

This portion of the bishops' address was referred to the Committee on Revision. The committee consisted of the following persons: S. M. Hippard, I. K. Statton, J. W. Hott, J. G. Mosher, J. H. Snyder, W. J. Shuey, George Miller, William Dillon, W. H. Price, L. Bookwalter, George Plowman, J. W. Fulkerson, C. U. McKee. To this committee were also referred, in general, the Confession of Faith, the Constitution, and the rule of the Discipline relating to secret societies.

To this committee was entrusted a responsibility immeasurably greater and more far-reaching in its significance than could be laid upon any other. They took ample time for deliberation, meeting again and again in session to consider the questions involved and the steps that should be recommended. Among the members of the conference generally the deepest interest was felt in the report which the committee might return. On the sixth day of the session they presented their report.

*The Report Authorizing the Church Commission.*

*To the General Conference:*

Your committee to which were referred the Confession of Faith, Constitution, and Section 3 of Chapter X. of the Discipline, beg leave to report that we have given these subjects much and most prayerful attention, and now submit the result of our deliberations:

*First.* We find that the present Constitution of the Church was never submitted to the suffrage of the members and ministry of the Church for ratification either by popular vote or by conventional approval, though it purports to be the Constitution of the "members" of the denomination.

*Second.* We find, by reference to the records, that throughout most of its history it has been the subject of question and differences of opinion as to its legality and binding force as an organic law.

*Third.* We find also that the clause found in Article II., Section 4, which says, "No rule or ordinance shall at any time be passed to change or do away the Confession of Faith as it now stands," and Article IV., which says, "There shall be no alteration of the foregoing Constitution unless by request of two-thirds of the whole society," are in their language and apparent meaning so far-reaching as to render them extraordinary and impracticable as articles of constitutional law.

*Fourth.* From the facts and reasons thus indicated we conclude that the Constitution has acquired its force only by the partial and silent assent of the Church, and that the General Conference has a right to institute measures looking to the amendment, modification, or change of the Constitution at any time when it is believed that a majority of our people favor a modification thereof.

*Fifth.* It is the sense and belief of your committee that the Constitution, as it stands, is not in harmony with the present wishes



of our people, as has been indicated in discussions, petitions, and elections during the past year.

*Sixth.* For these reasons, and for the purpose of finally settling all questions of dispute and matters of disturbance to the peace and harmony of the Church, so far as the Confession of Faith and the Constitution are concerned, your committee would recommend the adoption of the following paper, namely:

CHURCH COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, Our Confession of Faith is silent or ambiguous upon some of the cardinal doctrines of the Bible as held and believed by our Church; and,

WHEREAS, It is desirable and needful to so amend and improve our present Constitution as to adapt its provisions more fully to the wants and conditions of the Church in this and future time; therefore,

*Resolved,* By the delegates of the annual conferences of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, in General Conference assembled, that a Church Commission, composed of twenty-seven persons, and consisting of the bishops of the Church, and ministers and laymen appointed and elected by this body, an equal number from each bishop's district,—provided that the Pacific District shall have two members besides its bishop,—be and is hereby authorized and established.

The duties and powers of this Commission shall be to consider our present Confession of Faith and Constitution, and prepare such a form of belief and such amended fundamental rules for the government of this Church in the future as will, in their judgment, be best adapted to secure its growth and efficiency in the work of evangelizing the world.

*Provided,* 1. That this Commission shall preserve unchanged in substance the present Confession of Faith so far as it is clear.

2. That it shall also retain the present itinerant plan.

3. It shall keep sacred the general usages and distinctive principles of the Church on all great moral reforms as sustained by the Word of God, in so far as the province of their work may touch them.

*Provided,* further, That in the final adoption, as a whole, of a confession of faith and constitution for submission to the Church by the Commission, a majority vote of all the members composing the Commission shall be necessary.

*Resolved,* That this Commission shall meet at such time and place as the Board of Bishops may appoint, and is expected to complete its work by January 1, 1886.

The Commission shall also adopt and cause to be executed a plan by which the proposed Confession of Faith and Constitution may receive the largest possible attention and expression of approval or disapproval by our people, including all necessary regulations for taking, counting, and reporting the vote.

*Resolved,* That when, according to the foregoing provisions, the result of the vote of the Church shows that two-thirds of all the votes cast have been given in approval of the proposed Confession of Faith and Constitution, it shall be the duty of the bishops to publish and proclaim said result through the official organs of the

Church. Whereupon the Confession of Faith and Constitution thus ratified and adopted shall become the fundamental belief and organic law of this Church.

*Provided*, further, That the adoption of the Constitution as aforesaid shall in no wise affect any legislation of this General Conference for the coming quadrennium.

*Resolved*, That in case of any vacancy in the Commission, by death, resignation, or otherwise, the Commission shall fill such vacancy.

The necessary expenses of this Commission shall be paid out of the funds of the Printing Establishment.

Respectfully submitted,

S. M. HIPPARD, *Chairman*.

L. BOOKWALTER, *Secretary*.

W. J. SHUEY.

J. W. HOTT.

W. H. PRICE.

J. W. FULKERSON.

I. K. STATTON.

J. H. SNYDER.

GEO. PLOWMAN.

GEO. MILLER.

C. U. MCKEE.

This paper was signed by eleven out of the thirteen members of the Committee on Revision. Two of the members, J. G. Mosher and William Dillon, dissented, and laid before the conference a minority report.

Upon a motion being made to adopt the majority report, an extended and exhaustive discussion followed. For the greater part of two days the speaking continued, often with the warmth of men who were contending earnestly for their convictions. In the main, the proprieties of dignified discussion were well maintained. In itself, the struggle was a momentous one, and was so felt to be by every member of the conference. The liberals, as the progressive portion of the conference and of the Church generally had come to be called, saw in the adoption of the report a prospect for an escape from the extreme radicalism which had so long dominated legislation, and the hope of a broader and freer life for the Church. The radicals saw in its adoption the doom of principles upon which many of them laid a larger insistence than upon any other feature of the church life. Each side, therefore, exerted itself to the very best

of its ability to secure a majority in the final vote. It was a profoundly interesting hour when the roll was at last called for the yeas and nays. Many of the members seized a moment's opportunity for explaining their votes, some of them making a hurried final plea. The call being finished, the presiding bishop announced the result to be the decisive majority of *seventy-eight* yeas to *forty-two* nays. And thus was enacted one of the most important measures, as affecting vitally the future polity and life of the Church, known to the history of General Conference legislation.

It should be remarked that by no means all who here voted nay were in sympathy with the extreme radicalism which soon after began to prepare for rending asunder the Church. The votes of some were thus cast in the sincere belief that the movement was premature and would militate against the peace and harmony of the Church. A number of those who here voted with the minority stand to-day in their places in the Church, satisfied with the results which have followed.

## II. THE RULE ON SECRET SOCIETIES.

The committee having in charge the question of amending the Constitution and revising the Confession of Faith was also instructed to report on the law relating to secret orders. This committee presented a supplementary report, which, with a few amendments, was adopted in the following form :

We recommend that the following law in relation to secret combinations be adopted to take the place of Section 3, Chapter X., of Discipline :

### SECRET COMBINATIONS.

A secret combination, in the sense of the Constitution, is a secret league or confederation of persons holding principles and laws at variance with the Word of God, and injurious to Christian character

as evinced in individual life, and infringing upon the natural, social, political, or religious rights of those outside its pale.

Any member or minister of our Church found in connection with such combination shall be dealt with as in other cases of disobedience to the order and discipline of the Church,—in case of members, as found on page 23 of Discipline in answer to the third question of Section 3, Chapter IV., and in case of ministers, as found in Chapter VI., Section 13, page 65.

The introduction of this report, a milder expression of the law against secret societies, was the occasion of another animated discussion. The speaking was less protracted, because the vote previously taken indicated in advance that ultra-radicalism had lost its ascendancy, and that prolonged opposition to more moderate legislation would be useless. When the report was put upon its passage, the vote was found to be nearly the same in number on the two sides respectively as that which authorized the Church Commission. There were seventy-six yeas to thirty-eight nays, with six not voting.

### III. THE CHURCH COMMISSION CHOSEN.

On the twelfth day of the session the General Conference elected the members of the Church Commission, as provided for in the paper authorizing its appointment. According to this paper the bishops of each of the five episcopal districts were made *ex officio* members, and each of the districts was entitled to five representatives, either ministerial or lay, except the Pacific Coast District, which was entitled to two, thus making the whole number twenty-seven. The bishops were J. Weaver, J. Dickson, N. Castle, E. B. Kephart, and M. Wright. For the East District the following were elected: J. J. Glossbrenner, G. A. Funkhouser, L. W. Craumer, J. Hill, J. W. Hott; for the Ohio District: W. J. Shuey, Judge J. A. Shauck, H. Garst, D. L. Rike, J. S. Mills; for the Northwest District: W. M. Beardshear, A. M. Beal, George Miller,



H. A. Snepp, I. K. Statton ; for the Southwest District : L. Bookwalter, S. D. Kemp, J. B. King, J. H. Snyder, J. R. Evans ; for the Pacific Coast District : P. C. Hetzler, I. L. Kephart.

This conference in the main was characterized by a spirit of progress. Numerous reports relating to the various branches of church enterprise and activity were heard and considered, and such action taken as was suitable to the conditions and exigencies of the several interests. The conference acquired some further special interest from the fact that it was the last which the venerable Bishop Glossbrenner attended, after a service of forty years in the office of bishop. Just before the final adjournment he made a brief address, which was listened to with profound interest.

#### IV. PERSONAL NOTES.

##### *Daniel Kumler Flickinger, D.D.*

Bishop D. K. Flickinger was born near Seven Mile, Butler County, Ohio, on May 25, 1824. He is a grandson of the venerable Bishop Henry Kumler, Sen. His father, Jacob Flickinger, was an early minister in the Miami Conference. His mother, Hannah Flickinger, who died a few years ago at the great age of ninety-three, was a woman of sterling personal qualities, and of most beautiful Christian life, and was widely held in loving esteem. Mr. Flickinger entered at an early age upon the work of the ministry, becoming a member of the Miami Conference. He served in various relations as circuit preacher and pastor, became interested in foreign missionary work, and was one of the first company of three who located the mission of the Church in western Africa. He was a delegate to the General Conference of 1857, having just

then returned from his second trip to Africa. He was full of missionary enthusiasm, and was elected by the General Conference as corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society. To this office he at once addressed himself with much earnestness, and achieved great success. He was reëlected at six successive General Conferences, thus serving in the office through a period of twenty-eight years. It was most fitting that after so long service in this particular field he should, at the conference of 1885, be elected to the higher office of foreign missionary bishop. For four years more he gave his service to the missionary work, with the greater attention to the immediate interests of the foreign department. The General Conference of 1889 discontinued this office, and with this his official relations to the Church ceased.

In his long connection with the missionary work of the Church Dr. Flickinger rendered it an invaluable service. Being of an active temperament he kept the Missionary Society in close touch with the Church by frequent visits to the annual conferences, as also through the columns of the *Missionary Visitor* and *Religious Telescope*. The foreign work never ceased to enlist his special interest, and in its service, as missionary secretary and bishop, he made eleven visits to the other side of the ocean. He secured at various times large sums of money for the work, the funds for building the training school at Shaingay being obtained during the last four years of his official life. Until he was elected to the office of bishop, he was also editor of the *Missionary Visitor*.

The Church will not soon forget the great service he rendered it in the missionary work, or the frequency with which he imperiled his life on ocean voyages and in the malarious districts in Africa to which his duties took him.

But there can also be no other than a feeling of profound regret that, after a period of thirty-two years of official relationship with which the Church had honored him, he should now, late in the afternoon of life, have seen fit to join himself to those who went out from among us, and sought through years of grievous strife to injure the fair heritage they once had helped to build. Dr. Flickinger is now in the seventy-third year of his age, too far advanced in life to make so great a mistake. At the last session of the Miami Conference, of which he had been a member from the beginning of his ministerial life, record was regretfully made that he had withdrawn irregularly from the Church.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE CHURCH COMMISSION

#### I. PRELIMINARY.

IN the month of November, 1885, was held an assembly which will long be remembered as possessing a deep historic interest. It was the meeting of the Church Commission appointed by the General Conference in May preceding. Agreeably to the instructions of the conference the bishops had named the 17th of November as the day for the assembling of the Commission, and the First United Brethren Church, in the city of Dayton, Ohio, as the place of meeting. In accordance with the announcement of the bishops twenty-five of the twenty-seven members, as chosen by the General Conference, assembled on the day and in the place named. The two members absent were Bishop J. Dickson and Bishop M. Wright. From Bishop Dickson a letter was received explaining the reasons for his absence. From Bishop Wright no message was received. The names of the other commissioners are found in the preceding chapter.

At the hour of nine in the morning Bishop Weaver, the senior bishop, called the Commission to order. The session was opened with appropriate religious service, Bishop Weaver reading the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of John, and Dr. Garst, of Otterbein University, and Bishop Castle leading in prayer. Bishop Weaver then followed with a brief and impressive address, reminding



the members of the extreme importance and delicacy of the duty that was entrusted to them, urging them to seek fervently the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and to abide in much patience and love in considering each other's views as they might find expression through the series of days during which they might be together. It was arranged that the bishops preside in the order of their seniority, as is customary in the General Conferences. Rev. Lewis Bookwalter was chosen as secretary, and the Commission was duly organized for business.

The act of the General Conference creating the Commission and defining its powers and duties was then read, after which a number of motions were adopted to govern the order of proceeding. A proposition to sit with closed doors did not meet with favor. It was not deemed desirable that the general public should be invited, but that all interested persons should have free entrance whenever they wished to attend. A similar proposition with respect to reporters for the press was not supported. It was suggested that press representatives would exercise due courtesy.

A number of committees were appointed, the most important of which were :

1. On Confession of Faith : J. J. Glossbrenner, H. Garst, N. Castle, G. A. Funkhouser, J. W. Hott, W. M. Beardshear, M. Wright, J. R. Evans, P. C. Hetzler.

2. On Constitution : I. K. Statton, E. B. Kephart, W. J. Shuey, J. A. Shauck, L. Bookwalter, J. H. Snyder, I. L. Kephart, A. M. Beal, J. Weaver.

3. On Plan of Submission to the Church : J. S. Mills, J. Dickson, D. L. Rike, G. Miller, H. A. Snepp, S. D. Kemp, J. B. King, J. Hill, L. W. Craumer.

The two vacancies occasioned by absence were not supplied.

Thus organized, the Commission proceeded to the responsible business before it. The sessions were continued through six days. Ample time was given to the several committees to consider the parts of the work allotted to them, and the sessions were characterized by much earnest attention and a deep sense of the responsibility involved. Every feature of the several reports as returned by the respective committees was considered in the open session with the utmost scrutiny, so that in every particular the best possible results might be reached.

It is not necessary to trace here each successive step taken in these deeply important proceedings, which are preserved in the journal of the Commission. The general reader is most interested in seeing the results which were reached. These, so far as they relate to the Confession of Faith and the Constitution, are the same as now embodied in the Book of Discipline. The following is the Confession of Faith in its revised form :

## II. THE REVISED CONFESSION OF FAITH.

In the name of God, we declare and confess before all men the following articles of our belief :

### ARTICLE I.

#### *Of God and the Holy Trinity.*

We believe in the only true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; that these three are one—the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence or being with the Father and the Son.

### ARTICLE II.

#### *Of Creation and Providence.*

We believe that this triune God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, visible and invisible ; that he sustains, protects, and governs these, with gracious regard for the welfare of man, to the glory of his name.

## ARTICLE III.

*Of Jesus Christ.*

We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man; that he became incarnate by the power of the Holy Ghost and was born of the Virgin Mary; that he is the Saviour and Mediator of the whole human race, if they with full faith accept the grace proffered in Jesus; that this Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us, was buried, rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, to intercede for us; and that he will come again at the last day to judge the living and the dead.

## ARTICLE IV.

*Of the Holy Ghost.*

We believe in the Holy Ghost; that he is equal in being with the Father and the Son; that he convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that he comforts the faithful and guides them into all truth.

## ARTICLE V.

*Of the Holy Scriptures.*

We believe that the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the word of God; that it reveals the only true way to our salvation; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it by the help of the Spirit of God as the only rule and guide in faith and practice.

## ARTICLE VI.

*Of the Church.*

We believe in a holy Christian church, composed of true believers, in which the word of God is preached by men divinely called, and the ordinances are duly administered; that this divine institution is for the maintenance of worship, for the edification of believers, and the conversion of the world to Christ.

## ARTICLE VII.

*Of the Sacraments.*

We believe that the sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to be used in the Church, and should be practiced by all Christians; but the mode of baptism and the manner of observing the Lord's Supper are always to be left to the judgment and understanding of each individual. Also, the baptism of children shall be left to the judgment of believing parents.

The *example* of the washing of feet is to be left to the judgment of each one, to practice or not.

## ARTICLE VIII.

*Of Depravity.*

We believe that man is fallen from original righteousness, and apart from the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is not only entirely destitute of holiness, but is inclined to evil, and only evil, and that continually; and that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

## ARTICLE IX.

*Of Justification.*

We believe that penitent sinners are justified before God, only by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and not by works; yet that good works in Christ are acceptable to God, and spring out of a true and living faith.

## ARTICLE X.

*Of Regeneration and Adoption.*

We believe that regeneration is the renewal of the heart of man after the image of God, through the word, by the act of the Holy Ghost, by which the believer receives the spirit of adoption and is enabled to serve God with the will and the affections.

## ARTICLE XI.

*Of Sanctification.*

We believe that sanctification is the work of God's grace, through the word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are separated in their acts, words, and thoughts from sin, and are enabled to live unto God, and to follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

## ARTICLE XII.

*Of the Christian Sabbath.*

We believe that the Christian Sabbath is divinely appointed; that it is commemorative of our Lord's resurrection from the grave, and is an emblem of our eternal rest; that it is essential to the welfare of the civil community, and to the permanence and growth of the Christian church, and that it should be reverently observed as a day of holy rest and of social and public worship.

## ARTICLE XIII.

*Of the Future State.*

We believe in the resurrection of the dead; the future general judgment; and an eternal state of rewards, in which the righteous dwell in endless life, and the wicked in endless punishment.



## III. THE AMENDED CONSTITUTION.

The following is the Constitution as amended by the Commission :

In the name of God, we, the members of the CHURCH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, for the more speedy and effectual spread of the gospel, and in order to produce and secure uniformity in faith and practice, to define the powers and business of the General Conference as recognized by this Church, and to preserve inviolate the popular will of the membership of the Church, do ordain this CONSTITUTION:

## ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. All ecclesiastical power herein granted, to enact or repeal any rule or rules of discipline, is vested in a General Conference, which shall consist of elders and laymen elected in each annual-conference district throughout the Church. The number and ratio of elders and laymen, and the mode of their election, shall be determined by the General Conference.

*Provided*, however, that such elders shall have stood as elders in the conferences which they are to represent for no less time than three years next preceding the meeting of the General Conference to which they are elected; and that such laymen shall be not less than twenty-five years of age, and shall have been members of the Church six years, and members in the conference districts which they are to represent at least three years next preceding the meeting of the General Conference to which they are elected.

SEC. 2. The General Conference shall convene every four years, and a majority of the whole number of delegates elected shall constitute a quorum.

SEC. 3. The ministerial and lay delegates shall deliberate and vote together as one body; but the General Conference shall have power to provide for a vote by separate orders whenever it deems it best to do so; and in such cases the concurrent vote of both orders shall be necessary to complete an action.

SEC. 4. The General Conference shall, at each session, elect bishops from among the elders throughout the Church who have stood six years in that capacity.

SEC. 5. The bishops shall be members *ex officio* and presiding officers of the General Conference; but in case no bishop be present, the conference shall choose a president *pro tempore*.

SEC. 6. The General Conference shall determine the number and boundaries of the annual conferences.

SEC. 7. The General Conference shall have power to review the records of the annual conferences and see that the business of each annual conference is done strictly in accordance with the Discipline, and approve or annul, as the case may require.

SEC. 8. The General Conference shall have full control of The United Brethren Printing Establishment, The Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society, The Church-Erection Society, The General Sabbath-School Board, The Board of Education, and Union Biblical Seminary. It shall also have power to establish and manage any other organization or institution within the Church which it may deem helpful in the work of evangelization.

SEC. 9. The General Conference shall have power to establish a court of appeals.

SEC. 10. The General Conference may—two-thirds of the members elected thereto concurring—propose changes in, or additions to, the Confession of Faith; *provided*, that the concurrence of three-fourths of the annual conferences shall be necessary to their final ratification.

#### ARTICLE II.

The General Conference shall have power, as provided in Article I., Section 1, of this Constitution, to make rules and regulations for the Church; nevertheless, it shall be subject to the following limitations and restrictions:

SECTION 1. The General Conference shall enact no rule or ordinance which will change or destroy the Confession of Faith; and shall establish no standard of doctrine contrary to the Confession of Faith.

SEC. 2. The General Conference shall enact no rule which will destroy the itinerant plan.

SEC. 3. The General Conference shall enact no rule which will deprive local preachers of their votes in the annual conferences to which they severally belong.

SEC. 4. The General Conference shall enact no rule which will abolish the right of appeal.

#### ARTICLE III.

SECTION 1. We declare that all secret combinations which infringe upon the rights of those outside their organization, and whose principles and practices are injurious to the Christian character of their members, are contrary to the Word of God, and that Christians ought to have no connection with them.

The General Conference shall have power to enact such rules of Discipline with respect to such combinations as in its judgment it may deem proper.

SEC. 2. We declare that human slavery is a violation of human rights, and contrary to the Word of God. It shall therefore in no wise be tolerated among us.

#### ARTICLE IV.

The right, title, interest, and claim of all property, both real and personal, of whatever name or description, obtained by purchase or otherwise, by any person or persons, for the use, benefit, and behoof of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, are hereby fully recognized, and held to vest in the Church aforesaid.

#### ARTICLE V.

SECTION 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any General Conference,—two-thirds of the members elected thereto concurring,—which amendments shall be submitted to a vote of the membership throughout the Church, under regulations authorized by said conference.

A majority of all the votes cast upon any submitted amendment shall be necessary to its final ratification.

SEC. 2. The foregoing amended Constitution shall be in force from and after the first Monday after the second Thursday of May, 1889, upon official proclamation thereof by the Board of Bishops; *provided*, that the General Conference elected for 1889 shall be the lawful legislative body under the amended Constitution, with full power, until its final adjournment, to enact such rules as this amended Constitution authorizes.

#### IV. THE PLAN OF SUBMISSION.

It was apparent from the first that the manner of submitting the revised Confession of Faith and the amended Constitution to the people of the Church for approval or rejection would be questions of the most serious import. Several things were necessary to be provided for. Among these was, first, that the amendments submitted should be brought as widely as possible to the attention of the Church, in order to secure the largest vote possible. Second, it was necessary that the method of taking the vote should be so clearly defined as to provide against liability to mistakes in the balloting. And, third, it was of the highest importance that every provision be

clearly stated according to constitutional and legal forms, so that no irregularity might lead to the invalidation of the results. The whole subject was given the most careful attention by the committee who had this part of the duties of the Commission in charge, and the report as made by them, and after further consideration adopted, was so well devised in all its details that in all the searching scrutiny which followed subsequently in the civil courts nothing could be discovered that tended in any way to weaken the verdict rendered by the people in their vote approving the amendments.

The time for taking the vote was fixed for the entire month of November, 1888, thus giving, from the time of the sitting of the Commission, nearly three years for the consideration and discussion of the proposed amendments. Every means was employed, by publication in the *Religious Telescope* and the *Fröhliche Botschafter*, and in pamphlets and circulars, to inform the people concerning the nature of the proposed amendments, and every phase was submitted to the freest and amplest discussion, not only in the periodicals, but also in the annual conferences and elsewhere.

Provision was made for a separate vote on the Confession of Faith and the Constitution, so that each person might vote for one only, or for both, or against both. Provision, however, was also made for a separate vote on each of the two most important sections of the Constitution, that on lay delegation, and that relating to secret combinations, thus securing thorough flexibility in the arrangements and the fullest freedom for the expression of every individual preference.

The form of ballot used in taking the vote was as follows:



1888.

## UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST.

## BALLOT

On amendments to the Confession of Faith and Constitution.

Members wishing to vote NO on either proposition must *erase* the word YES and insert NO.

Confession of Faith.....	YES.
Amended Constitution.....	YES.
Lay Delegation.....	YES.
Section on Secret Combinations.....	YES.

Very complete provision was made for boards of tellers, local, conference, and general. The local boards consisted of the pastor, leaders, and stewards of each society. The conference boards of tellers were to be appointed by the annual conferences respectively, each at its session next preceding the month of November, 1888. The General Board of Tellers was appointed by the Commission itself, and consisted of J. Weaver, G. A. Funkhouser, L. Bookwalter, D. L. Rike, W. J. Shuey, J. A. Shauck, and H. Garst. All reports from the conference boards of tellers were required to be forwarded to the General Board of Tellers, at Dayton, Ohio, on or before January 1, 1889, and the General Board was required to make its report to the Board of Bishops not later than January 15, 1889.

## V. OPPOSITION TO THE REVISION.

The reader has seen that the action of the General Conference in creating the Church Commission met, during the session of that body, with strong opposition. This opposition did not by any means cease after the conference adjourned. On the other hand, every available agency was now employed to create throughout the Church a sentiment adverse to the step taken by the General Conference. Among these agencies was the publication of a weekly paper, the *Christian Conservator*, whose mission was

largely, if not chiefly, to oppose the revision contemplated. The subject was also freely discussed in all its aspects through the columns of the *Religious Telescope*, both for and against. In the sessions of the annual conferences and elsewhere it was brought up for debate and action. This busy opposition, which began at once after the adjournment of the General Conference, became greatly intensified after the Commission had held its meeting, as directed by the General Conference, and published the results of its work to the Church. The Confession of Faith and the Constitution as revised and amended were subjected to the closest scrutiny from every standpoint, and every conceivable form of opposition to them was set up. As far as every agency could be brought to reach the people throughout the Church, it was sought to influence their minds against the amended instruments, so as to bring about their failure by the popular vote. The amendments were characterized as revolutionary, as outrages, as involving a breach of faith, and the whole proceeding was declared unconstitutional and violent; and it was sought to persuade the people that if they were adopted the Church would no longer be the same Church, but would be a new and different body. This opposition was continued in its full activity until after the people had spoken through the ballot box, almost three years after the Commission had concluded its work.

Notwithstanding this opposition and the long-sustained effort to affect unfavorably the mind of the Church toward the amended Constitution and Confession, when the vote was counted, the results, as will be seen a little farther on, were found to be overwhelmingly in favor of adoption. The vote was taken in connection with that for delegates to the General Conference of May, 1889, at which the number of ballots cast was the largest in the

history of the Church. The vote was a most emphatic as well as conclusive expression of the will of the people in regard to each particular of the amended forms of these fundamental instruments as they came from the hands of the Commission.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE TWENTIETH GENERAL CONFERENCE—1889

#### I. PRELIMINARY.

THE assembling of the twentieth General Conference, that of May, 1889, was an event that was anticipated with profound interest throughout the entire denomination. This interest centered chiefly in the fact that this conference was expected to pass upon the work of the Church Commission appointed by the General Conference of 1885 and upon the popular vote taken upon the Confession of Faith and Constitution of the Church as revised and amended by the Commission.

The conference was held in the city of York, Pennsylvania, in the York Opera House in that city, the session opening at two o'clock P.M. on Thursday, May 9. Bishop Weaver, the senior bishop of the Church, called the conference to order. All the other bishops were present—J. Dickson, N. Castle, E. B. Kephart, M. Wright, D. K. Flickinger. The delegates from the annual conferences numbered one hundred and twenty-five, the entire body consisting of one hundred and thirty-one members. The conference continued in session from May 9 to 22.

The proceedings of this General Conference were marked throughout with a deep interest. A few of the more salient features are here to be spoken of. The first and fullest reference must relate to the action taken on the results of the revision of the Constitution and Confession, and the vote of the people thereon.



II. ADDRESS OF THE BISHOPS.

That portion of the quadrennial address of the bishops relating to the necessity for revision, the work of the Church Commission, and the vote of the people possesses a prominent historic interest, and the reader will be pleased to see it included here. The bishops said :

By the action and authorization of the General Conference of May, 1885, a Church Commission was convened on the 17th day of the following November, in Dayton, Ohio, to take under consideration the Confession of Faith and Constitution of the Church, and to prepare such a form of belief and such amended fundamental rules for its government in the future as would, in their judgment, be best adapted to secure its growth and efficiency in the work of evangelizing the world. After six days' deliberation upon these grave interests, to which were given the largest wisdom, the wisest thought, the closest scrutiny, and the most pious judgment within the capabilities of the Commission, a report was unanimously agreed upon, and in November last, by the largest expression ever obtained in the denomination, was adopted, the vote being in excess of a two-thirds majority.

We refrain from argument in support of what was done, but may be allowed some general statements to you upon a question of such wide and general interest to the Church as the one now challenging your most godly consideration.

It is sadly known throughout the Church that there has been for a time a growing friction along the line of what has been known as the organic law of the Church. Two antagonistic views have obtained and found ample advocacy in the past. The one is, that we have a valid Constitution, of absolute and unquestioned force, binding on all the members of the Church, and also so bounding, restricting, and limiting the action of the General Conference itself, that it cannot legislate along certain lines nor adopt certain measures, well defined in the limiting terms of the Constitution, without being guilty of usurpation and revolution. The other view is, that the General Conference, being a constitutional body, has judicial powers, is capable of judicial action, and hence, being the highest authority known in the jurisprudence of the Church, may, by right, adjudicate questions of dispute, interpret and construe law, as well as devise and formulate plans for the furtherance of its benevolent designs and its mission of mercy among men.

It is furthermore held that the restrictions which have been sup-

posed to form an impassable barrier to the authority of the General Conference are so far-reaching in their demands, and so ambiguous in their meaning, as to render them utterly untenable in a day of advanced thought and of expanding measures. It has been in a measure demonstrated that a feature of absolute immutability has been impressed on her Constitution, so that its amendment, according to its own terms, is an utter impossibility. This absolutism in our system, this inflexibility of provision for amendment, is being regarded, in the light of recent experience, as exceedingly unfortunate. While any change in fundamental principles should be rendered difficult of accomplishment, yet some flexibility should obtain in relations where the knowledge of actors is imperfect and their judgment confessedly fallible.

Now, while one view or line of interpretation, if pushed to the utmost limit of a literal construction, would make any change whatever utterly impossible, and while the other view, if expanded to the proportions of the most liberal construction possible, would make questionable inroads upon our fundamental principles, we must, avoiding these extremes, seek the happy mean between so much conservatism, on the one hand, that any change is impossible, and so much flexibility, on the other hand, that organic law has no sufficient safeguard.

Certainly a church constitution should have some possible method of procedure by which it could be amended. That those who gave us the Constitution intended to put it practically beyond the possibility of alteration or modification, has never been insisted upon. And yet the Church found itself in this very attitude when it came to meet a growing demand for more pliant and equitable measures arising from the exigencies of the times.

With a view of divesting this subject of all ambiguity, extirpating all doubt, and thus avoiding possible perplexing difficulties in the future, this whole matter was submitted to this Commission, where it found full and careful expression, and then went to a vote of the Church with such a result as will come to your notice and consideration by the official report to be hereafter submitted.

Beloved brethren, this may be the crisis period in the history of the Church. You will weigh well what has been done. The church of God is your priceless heritage. It is the purchase of the precious blood of Christ. As the chosen representatives of a Christian people, whose views and wishes you are supposed to reflect, you can afford to bid utter defiance to self and to selfish ends. You are representatives. The Church of the latter part of the nineteenth century has called you to conserve what to her is precious and priceless—soundness of doctrine and clearness of experience. These preserved, the

ancient landmarks still remain. New worlds await your conquest, unknown regions await your invasion, if you are men of cultured brain and consecrated heart. We may be aggressive without being ecclesiastical vandals; we may be conservative without being religious bigots.

True reformers and true conservatives walk hand in hand. Their goal is the same. They differ only in method, not in purpose; in head, not in heart. The one is not the enemy of progress, the other is not the enemy of conservation, yet either is liable to so judge the other. "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

As ministers, representative men, we can be active without becoming bitter partisans, be conservative without becoming stoical, and be progressive without becoming fanatical.

Your action will be decisive. Well may you tremble in the presence of the greatness of the work to be done. The voice of history both warns and cheers. Be cautious, but not faltering; brave, but not rash; firm, but not captious. The future of this Church, as well as the cause of God in general, will be helped or hindered by what we do. "Quit you like men, be strong."

The address was signed by Bishops Weaver, Dickson, Castle, Kephart, and Flickinger. Bishop Wright, who had declined to give it his signature, read a separate address, dissenting as to the portion here quoted.

### III. REPORT OF THE CHURCH COMMISSION.

On the second day of the session, on motion of W. McKee, the report of the Church Commission was ordered to be read. W. J. Shuey read the report.

*To the Bishops and the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, convened in the city of York, Pennsylvania, May 9, 1889:*

DEAR FATHERS AND BRETHREN: During the session of the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ held in Fostoria, Ohio, in May, 1885, a "Church Commission," composed of twenty-seven persons, was "authorized and established."

The duties and powers of said Commission were distinctly and fully defined, as the records of your body will show.

In pursuance of this action of the General Conference, the Commission thus authorized and appointed, on call of the bishops of the Church, assembled in the First United Brethren Church in the city

of Dayton, Ohio, on the 17th day of November, A.D. 1885, and, after mature and most prayerful deliberation during six days and nights, prepared for the consideration and adoption of and by the Church the following Confession of Faith and amended Constitution:

[Here follow the revised Confession and amended Constitution (which the reader has seen in the preceding chapter), the Plan of Submission, and the Address of the Bishops to the Church as published in January, 1886. The report then continues:]

It will be perceived that the time adopted for casting the vote of the Church was the month of November, 1888, the time being identical with that for electing delegates to the General Conference of 1889.

During the three years elapsing between the meeting of the Commission and the first publication of its work and the time of voting on its recommendations, no labor and expense were spared to secure the "largest possible attention" of our people to the proposed Confession of Faith and amended Constitution. Through the official organs of the Church, by pamphlet, and by comparison of the new with the old—tens of thousands in number—we endeavored to enlighten and interest our membership on the grave subjects in hand. Many of our pastors read the prepared documents from their pulpits, and by comment and explanation sought to make their provisions plain to all who were to exercise their prerogative to vote upon them.

The following is the aggregate vote for and against the several propositions submitted:

For the Confession of Faith.....	51,070
Against.....	3,310
Majority for Confession of Faith.....	47,760
Number required to adopt.....	36,245
For the amended Constitution.....	50,685
Against.....	3,659
Majority for the amended Constitution.....	47,026
Number required to adopt.....	36,230
For lay delegation.....	48,825
Against.....	5,634
Majority for lay delegation.....	43,191
Number required to adopt.....	36,306
For section on secret combinations.....	46,994
Against.....	7,298
Majority for section on secret combinations.....	39,696
Number required to adopt.....	36,194
Total number of votes cast for and against the several propositions.....	54,369



All the separate propositions having been adopted by the required two-thirds majority of all who voted, the Confession of Faith and amended Constitution, as framed and recommended by your Commission, are become "the fundamental belief and organic law of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ."

Your Commission kept a full and accurate record of its proceedings, which record we herewith present as a part of this report, and for inspection and ratification or seal of approval of General Conference, and ask that your Commission be discharged.

Finally, brethren, permit us to assure you that in the performance of the extraordinary and delicate duties assigned us we sought only to be guided by divine wisdom. In all our deliberations the kindest spirit prevailed, and the unanimous feeling of the members present was that our Father in heaven was not unmindful of our need of his blessing. Our chief concern has not ceased to be that the results of this reconstruction of our articles of religion and organic church polity may redound to the highest prosperity of the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ as represented by our denomination.

Respectfully submitted,

J. WEAVER.	I. L. KEPHART.
N. CASTLE.	A. M. BEAL.
E. B. KEPHART.	J. S. MILLS.
W. M. BEARDSHEAR.	JOHN A. SHAUCK.
LEWIS BOOKWALTER.	GEORGE MILLER.
W. J. SHUEY.	JOHN HILL.
J. W. HOTT.	J. H. SNYDER.
D. L. RIKE.	H. A. SNEPP.
I. K. STATTON.	P. C. HETZLER.
J. R. EVANS.	HENRY GARST.
G. A. FUNKHOUSER.	

Mr. Shuey explained that this report was signed by twenty-one of the twenty-five members participating in the work of the Commission. Of the remaining four Bishop Glossbrenner had died, and three were too remote to append their signatures. They were apprised of the purport of the report, and gave their assent to it.

On motion of B. F. Booth a special committee of seven was appointed to whom the report was referred. The committee consisted of T. D. Adams, D. R. Miller, C. T. Stearn, H. Floyd, D. Shuck, G. M. Mathews, and J. Medsger.

## IV. APPROVAL RECOMMENDED.

On Saturday morning, the third day of the session, after some preliminary business, this committee presented the following report, through its secretary, G. M. Mathews :

*To the General Conference :*

Your committee, to whom was referred the report to your body of the Commission constituted by the General Conference of four years ago, and charged with the duty of considering our present Confession of Faith and Constitution, and of preparing such form of belief, and such amended fundamental rules for the government of this Church in the future, as would, in their judgment, be best adapted to secure its growth and efficiency in the work of evangelizing the world, would beg to report as follows, viz.:

1. We have carefully examined the records of the proceedings of the Commission, and find them fully and accurately kept, and indicating a thorough consideration of all matters involved in their work, with impartial purpose to reach only right conclusions.

2. We have also compared the instructions and limitations by the former General Conference with their work as finally adopted by said Commission, and find that said instructions and limitations were obeyed and carried out with commendable accuracy.

3. The "Plan of Submission" we believe to have been in accord with the best methods of accomplishing the best results. Three years were given for discussion and reflection by our people as to the merits of the two documents submitted for their final approval or disapproval. All reasonable efforts were employed to secure the largest possible attention of all whose right and duty it was to vote on the propositions submitted.

4. In view of the fact that the proceedings and acts of the Commission have been found to be regular and in accord with the directions given by the highest authority known to our Church, your committee would recommend the adoption of the following, viz.:

*Resolved*, by the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, in quadrennial session assembled in the city of York, Pennsylvania, May 9, 1889,

1. That the recorded proceedings of the Commission, including the revised Confession of Faith and amended Constitution, as formulated and submitted to the vote of the Church, together with the method of submission and all other acts by which the will of the Church was ascertained thereon, are hereby approved and confirmed.

2. That because of the truth that the revised Confession of Faith and amended Constitution as a whole, and all the separate propositions thereof, submitted to the membership of our Church have

been adopted by more than the required two-thirds of all the votes cast thereon, as required by the General Conference of 1885, it is hereby declared and published by this conference, and for itself, that the said revised Confession of Faith and amended Constitution, as framed and submitted by the lawfully constituted Commission of the Church, are become the fundamental belief and organic law of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and will be in full force and effect on and after the 13th day of May, A.D. 1889, upon the proclamation of the bishops, as provided and ordered in the said amended Constitution.

This report was signed by five members of the committee, Halleck Floyd and D. Shuck presenting a dissenting report.

The reader will observe that the main points in this report relate to the questions whether the Commission adhered in all points to the instructions of the act under which it was appointed, whether the plan of submission to the people had been properly framed and carried out, and whether in the vote cast the requisite two-thirds majority had been given for approval of the amended instruments. The General Conference was not now asked to ratify the revised Confession and amended Constitution. That had been done by the great body of the Church, the essential authority upon this question. It now only remained for the General Conference, the highest judicial authority in the Church, to inquire if all the proceedings leading to the results reached had been regular and in orderly form, and place its approval upon the work of the Commission as prayed for by the Church. This inquiry was made through the committee of seven, and their report was now before the conference for approval.

The motion to adopt was followed by a prolonged discussion, the vote being reached just before the evening adjournment. The discussion on the part of the opposition was largely of the nature of a reiterated protest, no hope being entertained of overthrowing by a negative vote all

that had been done, or of modifying to any material extent the final results.

When the report was finally put upon its passage, it was adopted by a majority of more than five-sixths of the entire body, one hundred and ten members voting in the affirmative to twenty in the negative. One member who was absent afterward recorded his vote on the affirmative side. Five of those who voted with the minority did not unite with them in their later proceedings.

Thus by the nearly unanimous voice of the General Conference were the proceedings throughout leading up to the final consummation declared regular and valid, and the amended instruments needed only the further proclamation of the bishops, as had been duly provided for, to become the statement of the fundamental belief and law of the Church.

#### V. AN OLIVE BRANCH.

After the adoption of the report Dr. J. W. Hott, from a sincere desire to preserve kindly fellowship with those voting in the minority, offered the following paper :

WHEREAS, For the past four years a number of our brethren, members of this General Conference, and others, have, for reasons which they have often expressed, vigorously and determinately opposed the Church Commission and the adoption of the revised Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the Church adopted by the people; and

WHEREAS, They now doubtless feel disappointed and aggrieved by the results of the action taken by the Church; therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. We, the members of the General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ, assembled in York, Pennsylvania, hereby express our deep regret that any of our brethren should not be able to cheerfully acquiesce in the decision of the great majority of the votes of our people cast in the election held in November, 1888, upon these documents then submitted to the Church and now approved by this General Conference.



2. We hereby express our appreciation of the honesty and sincerity of our brethren opposed to the action of the majority of the Church, and we honor them for their faithfulness to their beliefs.

3. We hereby tender anew to these brethren our sympathy and fellowship in the love of Christ our Saviour, and in the charity of Otterbein and Boehm, the beloved founders of our Church. We shall use our influence in the time to come to the end that these brethren shall be treated as if these differences had never existed; and we most sincerely welcome them anew to our fellowship in the work of the gospel, and we shall deeply regret it if any of them should in any way diminish their interest in the work of the Church in which we have so long labored together, and which is alike dear to us all.

Several of those toward whom the paper was designed as a kindly expression strongly objected to its passage, and, as the time for adjournment was at hand, it was referred to the Committee on the State of the Church. By reason of events which occurred two days later, it was not again called up.

#### VI. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BISHOPS.

One more step remained to be taken to complete all that was requisite to put the amended forms of the Confession and Constitution in full effect. This was the official proclamation of the bishops that the amendments had been approved by the requisite majority of the vote of the Church. This proclamation was made to the conference on Monday morning, the 13th day of May. On the same day it was also published to the Church at large through the official organs, the *Religious Telescope* and the *Fröhliche Botschafter*. The following is the proclamation :

*The Board of Bishops of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ to the said Church at large and its General Conference assembled:*

BRETHREN BELOVED: In accordance with resolution 2, under proviso 2, of the Church Commission, enacted by the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ which

convened on the 12th day of May, 1885, in the city of Fostoria, Ohio, which resolution is as follows:

*Resolved*, That when, according to the foregoing provisions, the result of the vote of the Church shows that two-thirds of all the votes cast have been given in approval of the proposed Confession of Faith and Constitution, it shall be the duty of the bishops to publish and proclaim said result through the official organs of the Church; whereupon the Confession of Faith and Constitution thus ratified and adopted shall become the fundamental belief and organic law of this Church,

We, the bishops, having duly received the report of the Board of Tellers appointed to count the vote, do hereby publish and proclaim the result of the vote of the Church in accord with the provisions of the General Conference of 1885, and also in accord with the provisions of the amended Constitution itself, Article V., Section 2, which result is as follows:

[Here follow the official figures showing the vote on each separate proposition, with the majorities in each case, and the number necessary to adopt. They are the same as given on page 376.]

And the result being the required two-thirds, we do hereby publish and proclaim the document thus voted to be the Confession of Faith and Constitution of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and we hereby pass from under the old and legislate under the amended Constitution.

J. WEAVER.

J. DICKSON.

N. CASTLE.

E. B. KEPHART.

D. K. FLICKINGER.

YORK, PENNSYLVANIA, May 13, 1889.

The proclamation was read by Bishop Kephart. The reading was listened to with the most profound interest by the conference and the many visitors who filled the large hall to hear the official proclamation. The moment was felt to be one laden with the deepest significance as related to the future of the Church.

The proclamation, it will be observed, was signed by five of the six bishops of the Church.

#### VII. A DRAMATIC SCENE—THE SECESSION OF THE RADICALS.

When the reading had been completed, there occurred a scene of much interest, of which the official pub-

lished "Proceedings" do not take immediate notice, the occurrence not being a part of the regular proceedings of the conference. As soon as Bishop Kephart had resumed his seat, the bishop whose name was not attached to the proclamation, Bishop Milton Wright, with fourteen others of the twenty who had previously voted against approval, arose and left the hall. These fifteen men immediately proceeded to the Park Opera House, in the city of York, which had previously been secured for the purpose, where they assumed to continue the morning session of the conference, and so on through their several sittings until they finally adjourned. They further assumed to be the General Conference from the beginning, on the 9th day of May, and as such to be the true and only representatives of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and that the General Conference from which they had withdrawn was not the General Conference of the Church. As their number was only fifteen, and the number of annual conferences which they assumed to represent was forty-nine, they proceeded to fill vacancies from such persons as were present, until their number was increased to about thirty. Upon the assumption that they were the true General Conference of the Church, they elected persons to fill the general offices of the Church, as bishops, editors, publishing agent, missionary and other secretaries and treasurers, and the various church boards. They proceeded upon the very extraordinary presumption that the one hundred and sixteen members, including five bishops, who continued in their seats and in the proper and orderly discharge of their duties, constituted no longer the General Conference of the Church, but had, by placing the seal of their approval upon the various revisionary and amendatory steps, including the nearly unanimous vote of the Church, separated themselves from the Church, and

that thenceforth all their transactions possessed no longer any validity or binding power.

#### VIII. THE WITHDRAWAL RECOGNIZED.

The General Conference deemed it proper to recognize in an official way the withdrawal of these members of the conference, and in the forenoon of Tuesday, May 14, the following action was taken :

WHEREAS, Milton Wright, a bishop ; J. K. Alwood, W. H. Clay, and C. H. Kiracofe, delegates from North Ohio Conference ; H. T. Barnaby and W. S. Titus, delegates from Michigan Conference ; C. L. Wood and G. A. Bowles, delegates from North Michigan Conference ; C. Bender, a delegate from Rock River Conference ; A. Bennett, a delegate from Oregon Conference ; A. W. Geeslin, a delegate from Missouri Conference, and Halleck Floyd, a delegate from White River Conference, have actively participated in the proceedings of this body from its organization on the ninth day of May instant until the close of the third day's session ; and

WHEREAS, The bishop and these delegates have vacated their seats in this body and have joined in the formation of another church organization, outside and separate and apart from the place properly and officially occupied by this the lawfully elected General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ ; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the aforesaid persons are hereby declared as having irregularly withdrawn from this body and the Church, and are, in view of the facts above recited, no longer ministers or members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

The question being asked why the names of all of the members from the White River Conference did not appear in this paper, it was explained that by the report of the Committee on Credentials only one of them was legally entitled to a seat. The others could not withdraw from the conference. The reader will also here note that five of the twenty who voted against the report on the Commission work did not go with the seceders, but retained their places in the conference and the Church. From various considerations they did not approve the Commis-



sion movement, but they had no sympathy with secession. Among these was Ex-Bishop D. Shuck, of California.

IX. PROTESTS AGAINST THE COMMISSION WORK.

One more paper must here be introduced as part of the official history of this period. Soon after the publication of the revised Confession and amended Constitution, in January, 1886, petitions and memorials against its adoption were put into circulation throughout the Church, the purpose of which was to ask the General Conference of 1889 to give its voice against approval. These papers were brought to the General Conference, and referred to the appropriate committee, of which Ex-Bishop Shuck was chairman. Mr. Shuck, from this committee, on the sixth day of the session, submitted the following report:

1. We find that the petitions submitted to us come from forty-one conferences, aggregating 16,282 petitioners.

2. Said petitions have been in circulation for three years, contain names of parties who are dead, of parties who are not members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, names of persons who voted for the revised Confession of Faith and amended Constitution.

But notwithstanding said irregularities, adding the number of petitioners to the number of votes cast against the Commission act, there still remains a respectable two-thirds majority in favor of the revised Confession of Faith and amended Constitution.

And notwithstanding the facts above referred to, we do not call in question the integrity of or the interest taken in the prosperity of our Zion by the petitioners. And we would earnestly pray such petitioners and their friends that they do not hastily form their conclusions touching the action of the General Conference on the work of the Commission; also, that their interest in the Church of their choice remain undisturbed.

Your committee recommend that their petitions, with the names of the petitioners, be deposited with the publishing agent at Dayton, Ohio, to be preserved by said agent for future reference.

It may occur to the reader that of those voting against the several propositions submitted to them, ranging from 3,310 as the smallest to 7,298 as the largest minority,

probably much the greater number were included among the 16,282 petitioners, so that in adding this number to the several minorities they must be twice counted.

#### X. MISCELLANEOUS.

Among other important measures adopted by this General Conference was one relating to lay delegation in the General Conference. The amended Constitution making provision for this, the conference was now able to take this step, and arrangements were accordingly made for the admission of lay delegates in the General Conference of 1893.

It had long been the practice of the Church to permit women, who felt themselves to be divinely impelled, to speak from the platform or pulpit, but until now no provision had been made for ordaining them to the sacred office of ministers. The number of women wishing to preach the word has always been and still is few, but this conference placed upon record distinct action defining their status. The following was adopted :

Not wishing to hinder any Christian who may be moved by the Holy Spirit to labor in the vineyard of the Lord for the salvation of souls, it is ordered that whenever any godly woman presents herself before the quarterly or annual conference as an applicant for authority to preach the gospel among us, she may be granted license, provided she complies with the usual conditions required of men who wish to enter the ministry of our Church. When such person shall have passed the required examination before the regular committees, she may, after the usual probation, be ordained.

The proposition to establish a quarterly publication, to be called the *United Brethren Quarterly Review*, was considered and adopted.

A Historical Society for the Church having been organized some years previously, the conference, on a memorial from the society, adopted the following :

In view of the increasing importance to be attached to securing and preserving the papers, letters, relics, etc., connected with our church fathers and church life,

*Resolved*, That this General Conference hereby officially recognizes the Historical Society of which Bishop Kephart is now president, as the Historical Society of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ; and that said society shall through its officers make a quadrennial report to the General Conference.

Bishops Weaver, Kephart, Castle, and Dickson were re-elected. J. W. Hott was elected as bishop for the Pacific Coast District. W. J. Shuey was continued as publishing agent. I. L. Kephart was elected editor of the *Religious Telescope*, with M. R. Drury reëlected as associate. D. Berger was continued as editor of Sunday-school literature, W. Mittendorf as editor of the German periodicals, B. F. Booth as general missionary secretary, and W. McKee as general missionary treasurer. John Hill was elected secretary of the Church-Erection Society, D. R. Miller was continued as financial manager of Union Biblical Seminary, and J. W. Etter was elected editor of the proposed *Quarterly Review*, and assistant editor of the Sunday-school literature.

#### XI. PERSONAL NOTES.

*James W. Hott, D.D., LL.D.*

That was a wise choice which the General Conference made when it added Dr. James W. Hott to the episcopal board. He was in the full vigor of early middle life, being in the forty-second year of his age, and had attained the ripe maturity of a strong intellectual manhood. He possessed the advantages gained through a broad and varied experience as preacher and editor, and by extensive travel in our own and foreign countries. To this he added a fervent devotion to the Church in which he was born, and to which he had hitherto given his life in unremitting service.

Bishop Hott was born some miles from Winchester, in Frederick County, Virginia, on November 15, 1844. He was of United Brethren parentage, his father, Jacob F. Hott, being a minister in the Virginia Conference, and his mother, who is still living, being a woman of devout spirit and strong mental and moral endowments. Of the eight children born to them six were sons, four of them becoming ministers, and a fifth dying while preparing for the same work. One, C. M. Hott, after twenty-two years in the active ministry, closed his earthly life at Woodbridge, California. The bishop's early education was chiefly obtained in the excellent private schools near his home, and in his father's well-chosen library. At the age of thirteen he was converted and received into the Church under the labors of the late Rev. Isaiah Baltzell. He became a diligent Bible student, reading and re-reading the sacred volume through by the light of the blazing pine knots in the great kitchen fireplace. At the age of sixteen he preached his first sermon. His first license to preach, dated April 8, 1861, was signed by Bishop Markwood. In the February following, 1862, he joined the Virginia Conference. In 1864 he was ordained by Bishops Glossbrenner and Markwood. The War had broken out when he commenced his ministerial work, and he shared to the fullest extent the perils to which ministers were exposed in traveling over their large circuits. His journeys kept him constantly crossing the border, so that he was now within the Union and now within the Confederate lines. He procured passes from both sides as his duties required, and though frequently arrested by Confederate conscription officers, and sometimes held up by freebooters, he passed through all in safety. The Confederate Government exempted ministers from enforced military service, and when arrested by the officers he was uniformly released on



satisfying them that he was a minister. Through all this service during the War and afterward his labors were greatly blessed. The first three years were spent on one circuit, where he and his colleague gathered over six hundred souls into the Lord's garner.

In 1869 he was a delegate to the General Conference at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, being the youngest member of the body. In 1873, at the General Conference in Dayton, he was elected general missionary treasurer. He was then on the radical side of the exciting question which had four years previously been made an issue in one election, and was chosen in preference to Mr. McKee, who was a liberal. Four years of experience in mingling with ministers and people broadly through the Church in the discharge of the duties of his office, led to material modification of his sentiments, and in 1877, at Westfield, he was elected editor of the *Religious Telescope*. Under his wise administration the paper was relieved of the intense radicalism which for the previous eight years had dominated its columns, and of which many who were classed as radicals had become weary. For twelve years he conducted the paper with great acceptability to the Church. The conference of 1881 chose him, in connection with Dr. H. A. Thompson, as a delegate to the Methodist Ecumenical Conference in London. From this visit he took occasion to extend his journey across the Continent to Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, the result of which was the production of the valuable volume, "Journeyings in the Old World." In 1889, after these sixteen years of effective service, the General Conference laid upon him the yet higher responsibility of a bishop in the Church.

Bishop Hott is known throughout the denomination as an able preacher, writer, and presiding officer. In the latter capacity he has abundantly demonstrated his strength by

his clear grasp and thorough application of parliamentary law, as well as by his urbane dealing with members in the progress of business. In the councils of the bishops, as well as in the General and annual conferences, the soundness of his judgment is fully recognized. As a writer he is warm, earnest, and pleasing, expressing himself often with an attractive glow that appeals strongly to the heart. In the pulpit and in public addresses on the platform he has everywhere the warmest welcome. His style as a preacher may be said to be peculiarly his own, but it wins its way to the judgment and heart of every hearer. Many of his passages rise to the plane of true eloquence, and are uttered with thrilling power and effectiveness.

His duties as a bishop call him widely to and fro—recently across the sea to the mission fields of Germany and Africa. His present home is supposed to be at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, but he rests chiefly, when rest is taken, with his wife, in the home of one or another of his three daughters, all of whom are married to ministers.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A PERIOD OF LITIGATION

#### I. THE PUBLISHING HOUSE SUIT.

As was anticipated when the seceders withdrew from the General Conference at York, Pennsylvania, on the fourth day of the session, they went out and organized themselves into a body which they claimed to be the General Conference of the Church, and further assumed to act in the name of and for the Church, and under this assumption elected persons to fill the various general offices and boards of the Church. In pursuance of these assumptions it was expected that they would also, in due time, lay claim to all property, of whatever kind, belonging to the Church. It was not long until this expectation began to be realized. And thus began, not long after the adjournment of the conference of 1889, in the civil courts, a contest which involved so much annoyance and trouble, and so great an outlay of time, money, labor, and anxiety, as to prove exceedingly harassing to the Church generally. This struggle continued until, after years of effort, the decision of the highest court in one State after another had overthrown the last hope of the seceders for success.

The first formal claim for the possession of church property was made when, one day in July, 1889, Ex-Bishop Milton Wright, who claimed to be the publishing agent for the Church, appeared at the office of the United Brethren Publishing House, and served upon the pub-

lisher, William J. Shuey, a written notice demanding possession of the House, with all its appurtenances, including real estate, machinery, stocks, accounts, the keys to the House and safes, and all property of whatever kind belonging to the House. The demand was refused, and immediately thereafter the board of trustees, of which body David L. Rike was president, filed a petition in the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County, Ohio, for the quieting of the title in their favor. Halleck Floyd being president of the pretended board of trustees of the Publishing House, the case became known in the court records as *D. L. Rike et al., Trustees, v. Halleck Floyd et al.* To the petition of D. L. Rike and others Halleck Floyd and others filed their answer.

After several preliminary motions and postponements the defendants, in March, 1890, made application to the United States District Court at Cincinnati for removal from the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County on the ground of local prejudice. Judge Sage, of the United States District Court, overruled the application for removal.

Finally the case came on for hearing, December 4, 1890, before Judge Henderson Elliott, of the Common Pleas Court of Montgomery County. After hearing and refusing two motions of the defendants, and listening to the pleadings of both parties, the judge, by mutual consent and at the request of counsel for the defendants, entered a decree, *pro forma*, in favor of the plaintiffs, with the understanding that the case be carried to the Circuit Court of the said County of Montgomery.

The trial before the Circuit Court, to which appeal was taken by the radicals, began on June 17, 1891. The presiding judges were Charles C. Shearer, of Xenia, Ohio, Gilbert H. Stewart, of Columbus, and James M. Smith, of Lebanon, Ohio, the last named sitting in place of Judge



J. A. Shauck, who, as a trustee of the establishment, was one of the plaintiffs in the case. Counsel of high distinction for ability was retained on both sides, the attorneys for the Church being Hon. Lewis B. Gunckel and Hon. John A. McMahon. Among the attorneys for the defendants was Judge William Lawrence, for whom special eminence as an ecclesiastical lawyer was claimed. Nine days were spent in the trial, seven in presenting documentary and oral testimony, and two in argument. Among the witnesses for the plaintiffs were Bishop J. Weaver, Bishop E. B. Kephart, Prof. A. W. Drury, Prof. J. P. Landis, Rev. W. J. Shuey, Rev. D. Berger, Rev. William McKee, Rev. B. F. Booth, and Rev. G. M. Mathews; for the radicals, Bishop Milton Wright, Rev. C. H. Kiracofe, Rev. Halleck Floyd, and others. A number of depositions were introduced—for the Church, those of Dr. Philip Schaff, of Union Theological Seminary, New York City, Dr. James Strong, of Drew Theological Seminary, and Bishop J. M. Walden, of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for the seceders, those of Dr. Herrick Johnson, of Chicago, Dr. J. G. Carson, of Xenia, Ohio, Dr. Willis K. Beecher and Dr. Sprague, of Auburn, New York, and Dr. Lewis Davis.

In this trial a wide field was covered, and every inch of ground was contested with distinguished ability. The importance of the case was fully comprehended not only from the standpoint of the large amount of property directly involved, but from the probable bearings of the decision in this case upon millions of dollars' worth of other property. The main point sought to be established by the radicals was that the Church, through its adoption of an amended Constitution and revised Confession of Faith, had ceased to be the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and had become another and different church—

that the Confession had ceased to be Arminian and had become Calvinistic; that the General Conference which elected the publishing agent and trustees was not the General Conference of the United Brethren Church, and that therefore the publishing agent and trustees now holding the property were not entitled to such possession; and that they themselves, as elected by the small body of seceders who left their seats in the General Conference and organized for the transaction of General Conference business, were the rightful representatives of the Church, and as such entitled to hold and control the property.

It would be a wearisome task to place in review before the reader the methods resorted to, the arguments used, and the sophistries employed to establish these claims. It will be sufficient to say that the findings of facts and the legal opinion and decree of the court were a complete overthrow of all that was claimed by the radicals. The very able rendering of the court was unanimously concurred in by the three judges.

The case was carried on appeal to the Supreme Court of Ohio. Four years elapsed before it was reached in the course of business before that high tribunal. The day for hearing was set for the 13th of June, 1895. An exhaustive examination was here made by a full bench, excepting Judge Shauck, who had then become a member of that body, but did not sit in the case. This court regarded the reasonings and conclusions of the Circuit Court as being so thorough and satisfactory that it did not deem it necessary that a new finding of facts or opinion should be written. On June 27, 1895, it handed down its decision, in which it declared: "The case has been fully and exhaustively considered in the opinion of the Circuit Court, as announced by Shearer, J. . . . We fully affirm the reasoning of the court and the conclusions there rendered.

Judgment affirmed." The court was unanimous in this decision. For some of the essential points in Judge Shearer's lengthy and very able rendering, the reader is referred to Appendix II.

An incident of the Circuit Court, as illustrating the temper of the judges in the case, is well worth recording. When the long strain of the trial was at last relieved by the rendering of the court, there was naturally a feeling of pleasure on the part of those who were vindicated, and Mr. Shuey, in speaking with Judge Shearer, thanked him for the decision. The judge, with a quiet smile, but an air of unmistakable firmness, replied: "You need not thank me for it. If the facts had been the other way, I would have given it against you in cold blood."

## II. OTHER SUPREME COURT DECISIONS.

In seven other States, namely, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, and California, suits have been carried up to the Supreme Court, and in all of these except the last named the decision of this final tribunal has been rendered. Five of these courts gave their judgment in favor of the Church; one, that of Michigan, in favor of the radicals. In California a case on appeal is pending.

The case before the Indiana Supreme Court came up on appeal from Wayne County in that State, in which the lower court had decided in favor of the Church, the contention being for the quieting of title to a church-house. The Supreme Court consists of five judges, one of whom did not sit in the case, having been consulted by one of the parties to the suit previous to his election to the supreme bench. The decision of the judges was unanimous. It was handed down on November 6, 1891.

The case in Pennsylvania was brought on appeal from

the Common Pleas Court of Franklin County. The trustees of a church had brought suit to quiet their title to a church-house in Greencastle, in that county. The seceders were defeated in the lower court, and appealed to the court of last resort. The judges of this court are seven in number. They gave a unanimous rendering confirming the decree of the lower court in favor of the Church. The decision was rendered in July, 1893.

In Oregon the contention was for the possession of the property known as Philomath College. The history of this case is somewhat remarkable. The Supreme Court, having once decided in favor of the radicals, was petitioned for a rehearing by the trustees, which was granted, a very unusual thing for a Supreme Court to do. The court consisted of three judges. One of these had rendered a most able opinion in our favor in the lower court, and did not sit on the case in the Supreme Court. One of the two remaining judges wrote an elaborate and very able opinion, giving the property to the Church. The second judge dissented, but wrote no opinion. The two being unable to agree, the decree of the lower court remained undisturbed, and the property was left in the possession of the Church. The decision was rendered in October, 1894.

In Illinois a suit was brought by the seceders for the possession of a church in Livingston County in 1891. The case was contested with great ability in the Circuit Court of that State, the decision being given in favor of the Church, in 1892. It was appealed by the radicals to the Supreme Court. This court consisted of seven judges. The case was submitted to them in March, 1894. On January 15, 1895, the court handed down its decision, the seven judges agreeing. The decision confirmed the decree of the lower court, giving the property to the Church.



In Missouri a suit was brought for the ejectment of a radical minister from the occupancy of a parsonage property. The case was heard in December, 1891. In September, 1892, the judge decided in favor of the Church. The case was taken on appeal by the radicals to the Supreme Court. It was heard on January 16, 1895. On March 29, 1895, the four judges sitting in the case gave a unanimous decision, confirming that of the lower court.

In Michigan the contest was for the possession of Salem Church, in Allegan County. The trial court decided the case in favor of the Church. The case was carried up on appeal. The court consisted of five judges. One of the number did not sit, having been previously interested. Three of the judges decided the case in favor of the radicals. One wrote an able dissenting opinion. The case was filed in December, 1893. In this State a lower court has since given possession of a church-house and parsonage to the Church, notwithstanding the decision of the higher court. The case has again been appealed to the Supreme Court, with a changed bench. It is hoped, with good reason, that the Supreme Court will correct its error.

In the Dominion of Canada a decision has been rendered, in the Court of Appeal, of a very important character as affecting all the property of the Church in the Dominion. A case in a lower court was decided in favor of the radicals. It was carried on appeal to the higher court, the four judges sitting giving separate opinions, but a very thorough and unanimous rendering, reversing the decision below. In this case the radicals were represented by the Hon. Ex-Vice-Chancellor Blake, of Toronto, who is acknowledged to be without a superior as an advocate before a court. In the lower court he gained an easy victory; in the higher court he met with necessary defeat, the facts and the law being on the other side.

A case at the present writing is pending in the United States Circuit Court at Cincinnati. There seems little likelihood that the judge before whom it is brought will differ widely from the consensus of seven of the high tribunals above mentioned.

In all these cases it was felt that issues of the highest importance were involved, and no effort possible to human industry and skill was spared to win. The side of the Church was defended with great ability in nearly every suit, and the radicals sought everywhere the ablest counsel available. During the tedious and wearisome conflicts the bishops of the Church and many of its ministers and laymen bore a portion of the burden. But it is due to say that throughout all the vexatious litigations no other one rendered the Church so eminent service as was given by William J. Shuey. As financial head of the Publishing House, he bore the chief strain of the litigation for its possession, and elsewhere, in most of the other suits, he rendered similar valuable assistance. Next to him in this defense of the Church and its interests stood the venerable Bishop Weaver, a tower of strength in every court. Others who were not so constantly in the work rendered invaluable aid. But now that the troubles are about over, the whole Church has reason for profound gratitude to God, who has led righteousness to triumph.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE TWENTY-FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE—1893

THE General Conference of 1893, the latest of the series at the present writing, is of so recent date that a very brief reference to it seems most appropriate. The conference was held in the city of Dayton, Ohio, commencing May 11, and continuing through twelve days. A very large amount of business, much of it routine, was transacted. The various reports from the different departments of the Church indicated that encouraging progress had been made during the quadrennium. Discussion in the papers presented took a broad and instructive range, and some of them have a permanent value.

#### I. LAY DELEGATES.

Two very noteworthy features marked this conference. One of these was the appearance, for the first time in the history of the Church, of lay delegates on the floor of the conference. This was in accordance with the provision in the amended Constitution of the Church which declares that the "General Conference . . . shall consist of elders and laymen." This feature of the Constitution having become operative after the conference of 1889, delegates from the laity were chosen in the ratio determined by that conference. The number of ministerial and lay delegates was, respectively, one hundred and twenty-four and seventy-two. It is of special interest also to record the fact that among the lay delegates two were women. Women had always possessed the right to vote in elections for delegates

to the General Conference, as well as for local church officers, and had also been admitted to seats in the annual conferences. And now the right to sit as members in the General Conference was exercised unchallenged, notwithstanding the fact that the Book of Discipline contains no distinct provision in which they are named as being eligible. The returns of elections of delegates for the General Conference of May, 1897, indicate that nine women have been elected as delegates to that conference. The admission of women to membership in this highest body of the Church is in harmony with the progressive spirit of the age, and ought to be regarded as most fitting in a church in whose best activities women are so largely engaged.

## II. TIME LIMIT REMOVED.

A second feature which will make the conference one of special historical interest was the elimination, from the Book of Discipline, of the time limit as applying to the pastorate. On this point the Discipline had always been liberal, providing that by special approval of the annual conference ministers might be returned for a longer term of years than was fixed in the general limitations. By the action of this General Conference all limitation is swept away, except that appointments must still be made for a single year at a time.

In the election for general superintendents, Bishops Castle, Kephart, and Hott were reëlected, and J. S. Mills was added to the episcopal board, Bishop Weaver, as previously noted, being elected bishop *emeritus*.

## III. PERSONAL NOTES.

*J. S. Mills, D.D., Ph.D.*

Bishop J. S. Mills, the latest accession to that company upon whom the General Conference bestows its highest



distinctions, was born in Washington County, Ohio, on February 28, 1848. His father was of the Society of Friends, but soon after marriage he, with his wife, joined the United Brethren Church. The bishop's early education was obtained in the neighborhood common schools, with two years in an academy. Later he spent four years in the Illinois Wesleyan University, from which he subsequently received the degrees of A.M. and Ph.D. on examination. He was converted at the age of eighteen, joined the Scioto Conference two years later, in 1868, and was ordained in 1871. When the Central Ohio Conference was formed, in 1878, he became a member of that body, and in 1890 he transferred his membership to the Iowa Conference. On entering the ministry he served on circuits, stations, and as presiding elder, his last pastoral charge being the Otterbein University church, to which he gave six years of service. From Otterbein he was called to Western College, which institution he served for six years, three years as a professor and three as its president.

Bishop Mills is a man of strong mental endowments and of recognized culture. He is a close thinker, and possesses in fine degree the power of exact expression. In sermon or other address his speech is characterized by elegant finish, never redundant, nor yet too concise, the right word always in the right place. He leads a close student life so far as public duties permit, is fond of scientific and metaphysical inquiry, and is interested in the great social problems of the day. He is a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, and an associate member of the Iowa Academy of Science.

In the allotment of episcopal residences Bishop Mills was assigned to the Pacific Coast, so that his present home is in Eugene, Oregon. His field, however, like that of

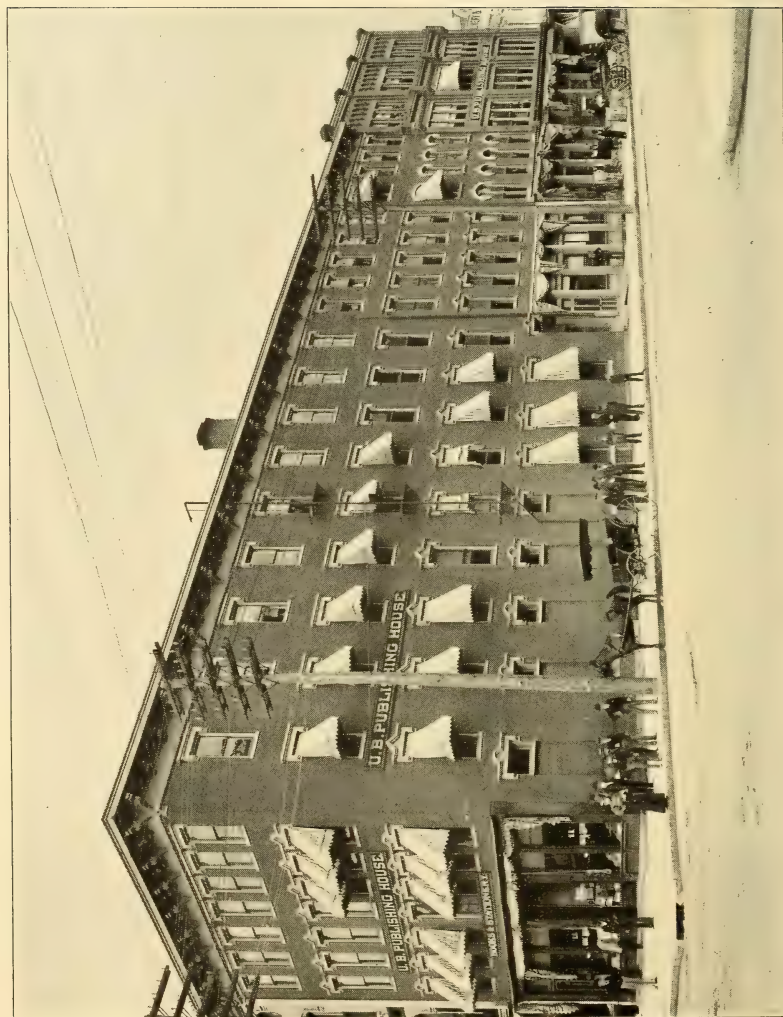
the other bishops, is the entire Church. At the present writing he is making a visit to the foreign fields in Germany and Africa. The bishop is the youngest member of the Board of Bishops, is usually in excellent health and vigor, and large possibilities of future service lie before him.

PART II  
DEPARTMENTS OF CHURCH WORK









THE UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE IN 1897.

## PART II

### DEPARTMENTS OF CHURCH WORK

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE

It was a wise step when the General Conference, in 1833, resolved to found for the Church a publishing house which should be under central and official control. It was an early period for an enterprise of this kind to be undertaken, only a few of the now great religious publishing houses having then been organized.

##### I. PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Previous to 1834 all printing done for the Church was by private enterprise, and consisted chiefly of such publications as met an immediate demand—principally Disciplines and hymn-books. The first printed Discipline, that of 1815, was printed at Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1816, by John F. Koch, in the German language. That of 1817, also in German, was printed by John Armbrust & Co., at Greensburg, Pennsylvania. In 1819 it was reprinted in German and English on opposite pages, by Gruber & May, at Hagerstown. The succeeding Disciplines for each quadrennium up to and including 1833 were printed in like manner by different persons in different cities. After 1837 all the Disciplines were printed by the Church publishing house.

The publication of hymn-books for the Church was accomplished in the same manner, by individual enterprise. The first book of this kind was published by order of the Conference of 1807, held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. It was compiled by George A. Guething, and printed in Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1808. It contained two hundred hymns. The book was in the German language. The second was compiled by Henry Evinger and Thomas Winters, of the Miami Conference, also in German. It was published in 1815. The third, the first hymn-book in the English language, was compiled by Rev. James T. Stewart, also of the Miami Conference. It was printed in Cincinnati in 1826. A fourth, prepared by Jacob Antrim, of the Miami Conference, containing three hundred and thirty-two hymns, was printed in 1829 by a firm in Dayton, Ohio. A revision of a German hymn-book, by Jacob Erb, authorized by the General Conference, followed. A sixth book, in English, by William R. Rhinehart and Jacob Erb, under the authorization of the Virginia and Pennsylvania conferences, was printed in 1833. This passed afterward under the control of the General Conference, and continued in use until 1849, when it was displaced by a revised collection ordered by the General Conference of 1845.

The field of periodical publication was first entered by the courageous but inexperienced Aaron Farmer, of the Miami Conference. In 1829, at Salem, Indiana, he sent forth the pioneer journal, *Zion's Advocate*, under special restrictions by the conference as to doctrinal teaching, "unprofitable controversy," and so on. There was slight need for this embargo on the liberty of journalism, for the publication, in character quite satisfactory to its readers, soon perished for lack of funds. In 1833 the *Mountain Messenger* made its appearance at Hagerstown, Maryland,



with William R. Rhinehart as proprietor and editor. It was saved from probable like disaster by being merged into the official publication undertaken soon afterward.

## II. THE PUBLISHING HOUSE ORGANIZED.

The appearance of these early publications served to emphasize the need of something better for the Church, a paper which should be under the direction of the General Conference, and receive the patronage of the entire Church. In the General Conference of 1833 the subject received appropriate attention, among the foremost advocates of such an enterprise being Rev. John Russel, afterward Bishop Russel. The conference being held in Pickaway County, Ohio, near the town of Circleville, that place was chosen for its location, and Mr. Russel, Jonathan Dresbach, and George Dresbach were elected trustees for the enterprise, with instructions to solicit donations, secure subscriptions, and proceed to publish the proposed paper. It was ordered that the paper be "devoted to religious, moral, and literary intelligence."

The trustees proceeded cautiously in the discharge of their duties, and it was not until the 31st of December, 1834, more than a year and a half from the time it was ordered, that the first number of the new paper appeared. It was issued under the title which it has since retained unchanged—*The Religious Telescope*. Mr. Rhinehart, of the *Mountain Messenger*, became its first editor and publisher, the subscription list of the *Messenger* being transferred to the *Telescope*. The paper consisted of four pages, fifteen by twenty-two inches in size. For some time it was published semimonthly, the price per year being \$1.50. The subscription list for the paper rose slowly, reaching for some years but little beyond a thousand names, and these mostly obtained on the credit system. Mr. Rhine-

hart was an ardent reformer, and his radical utterances through the paper, while assisting greatly in preparing the way of advanced sentiment in the Church, especially on the slavery and temperance questions, did not in those days tend to add to the popularity of the paper, or to augment its bank account. The enterprise was begun with liabilities amounting to sixteen hundred dollars, and soon the debt ran up to six thousand dollars, and the House must have failed had it not been sustained by the courage and ample credit of the trustees. In 1839 William Hanby, afterward bishop, became editor and publisher, having direction for six years. Then followed David Edwards, also afterward bishop, as editor. Under the more prudent direction of these men the paper grew in acceptability. The subscription list advanced, and by 1849 the liabilities were cleared away, and four years later the net assets were placed at thirteen thousand dollars. These, however, included moneys due on subscriptions and other assets which were never collected.

### III. THE REMOVAL TO DAYTON.

The need of a better location for a house that should meet the growing wants of the Church had for some years been felt. The proposition for a change was considered by the General Conference of 1853, and it was determined to remove the House to Dayton, Ohio. A lot on the northeast corner of Main and Fourth streets, fronting fifty-nine and one-half feet on Main and one hundred and fifty-two feet on Fourth, was purchased for eleven thousand dollars. On this ground was situated a two-story brick residence, and within a few months after the adjournment of the General Conference the establishment was located in this house as its temporary home. The removal was accomplished under the direction of

Rev. Solomon Vonnieda, who had just been elected as publishing agent.

In 1854 a substantial four-story brick building, forty by ninety feet in extent, was erected upon this lot, with ample equipment of machinery for the requirements of that time. The cost of the building with its machinery was fifteen thousand dollars. A book-store was established in connection with the House. Two new periodicals were started in the quadrennium from 1853 to 1857,—the *Unity Magazine* and the *Children's Friend*,—both edited by David Edwards. Thirteen new books were published, and there were other abundant signs of activity. John Lawrence, who had been assistant editor of the *Religious Telescope*, was now its editor. The removal of the House to a new location, and the new energy and life apparent in all its departments, implied also increased financial outlays, and a burdensome debt was soon in process of accumulation.

#### IV. MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT.

##### 1. *Finances.*

The reader has seen that at the organization in 1834 the House was practically without capital, and had liabilities amounting to about \$1,600; that these liabilities afterward advanced to nearly four times that sum, but in 1849 had been fully paid off. After the removal to Dayton, in 1853, with the investment in real estate, erection of building, purchase of machinery and stock, with other added expenses, and no adequate returns, new liabilities were created, which in 1857 amounted to over \$53,000. Against this were placed assets in property and accounts, none of which could be immediately used to diminish the debts. Eight years later, in 1865, the liabilities still amounted to above \$52,000, though valuable por-

tions of the ground owned by the House had been sold to obtain relief. At this time the assets were estimated at something above \$63,000, leaving but a narrow margin between the credit and debtor sides of the accounts. Not less than \$25,000 had been lost to the House through the credit system.

It was at this crisis that Rev. W. J. Shuey, who had been appointed assistant agent in June, 1864, was elected, by the General Conference of May, 1865, as the financial head of the House. Mr. Shuey began at once a careful study of its financial condition, with a view of ascertaining by what methods at least a gradual reduction of this consuming debt might be attained. He was not long in coming to the conclusion that unless at least a partial relief could be reached the House was doomed to a collapse at no distant day. For the purpose of some immediate relief he devised and laid before the General Conference of 1865 the Publication Fund plan. The plan was approved by the conference, and an appeal was made to the Church for contributions to the fund. The Church responded to this call to the extent of about \$18,000, thus furnishing a very material relief to the strained financial condition. He began, also, after entering upon the full control of the House, that close and careful supervision of its business in all its details by which the current of its affairs was turned, and that upward trend was begun which has never turned backward. Under this wise management, in consultation from time to time with its board of trustees, and with the generous support of the ministers and people throughout the Church, the House has steadily gained in its resources until a high position among the foremost of denominational publishing houses has been attained.

Through all the subsequent years, of either general



financial prosperity or depression, the House has seldom passed a year without adding to the credit side of the ledger. The general assets in the year 1896 had reached the sum of \$365,630.50, while the net assets were \$315,665.08. The real estate, including the additional grounds purchased and the new buildings erected, has advanced from almost nothing in 1834 to over \$100,000 in 1896. The cash sales of books have amounted to nearly \$1,600,000, and the cash receipts from periodicals have been more than \$1,700,000. The aggregate receipts from the business since the founding have been over \$4,250,000. In benevolences, such as carrying non-paying publications, paying General Conference expenses, and dividends to the annual conferences, the House has dispensed over \$57,000. To this sum about \$30,000 must be added as expense in the recent litigations. In its financial standing in the business world the House holds its place in the first rank.

### *2. Buildings and Equipment.*

To the building erected in 1853, ninety feet in length, with a frontage of forty feet, extensions have since been added, until it is now two hundred feet long, the rear portion being ninety-nine and one-half feet in depth. The building as now constructed affords a combined floor space of more than one acre. It is thoroughly equipped with the machinery requisite to a high-class publishing house. It is heated throughout with steam, lighted with electricity produced by its own dynamos, and a large part of its machinery is operated by electric power.

### *3. Departments.*

The departments of the House at present are the publisher's office, book department, editorial rooms, com-

posing, job printing, electrotyping, power, press, binding, and mailing departments. All of these have been enlarged from time to time, as required by the development of business. The establishment has long had a wide reputation for high-class work in all its branches, and the bookstore connected with the House is one of the best equipped in any city west of New York.

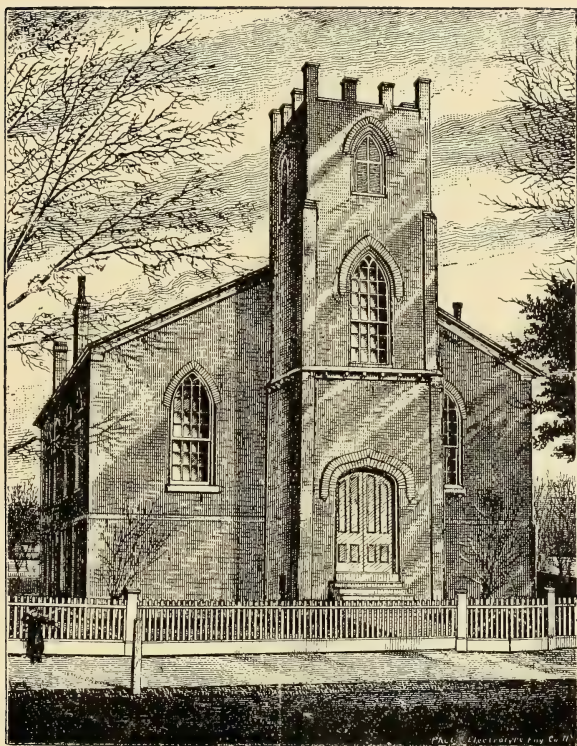
#### V. THE PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS.

In the founding of the Publishing House the object proposed was to supply the people of the Church with wholesome literature of a religious and general character. In no department has the growth of the House been more strikingly illustrated than in its periodical publications.

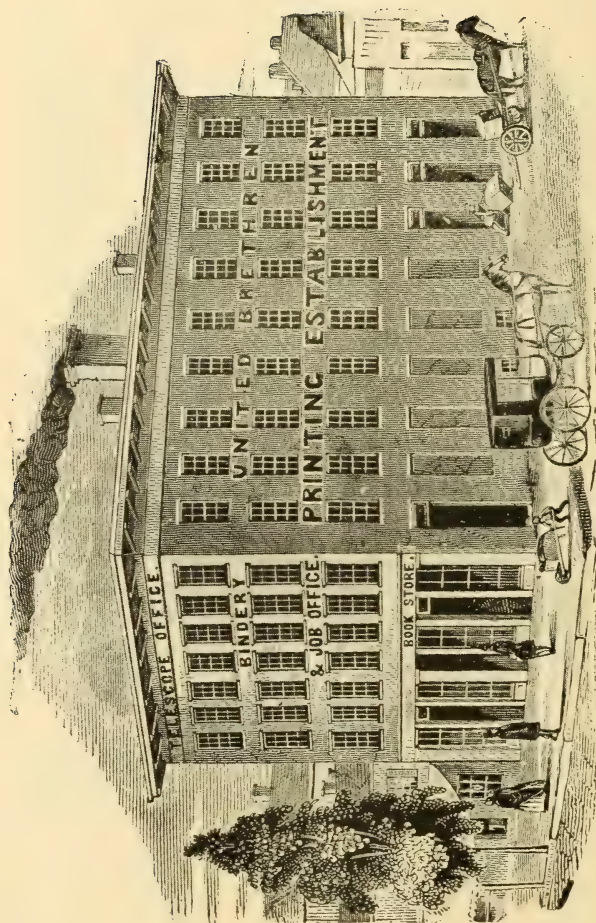
##### 1. *The Religious Telescope.*

This paper, the earliest publication issued by the House, still holds, in the popular regard, the chief place among its now numerous periodicals. From the small semi-monthly folio of 1834 it has advanced through various stages of folio of larger size, octavo, or eight-page, and sixteen-page, up to its present elegant thirty-two-page form. The broad mission of this paper to the Church cannot be indicated in a brief description. It has throughout its career stood out bravely on all questions of reform, and has sought in every way to aid in building up all other interests of the Church. Its early issues were printed on a small hand-press. It is now printed from a rapid web perfecting press, capable of issuing five thousand copies per hour, printed on both sides, pasted, cut, and folded, ready for mailing.

The first editor was Rev. William R. Rhinehart, whose official connection with the paper continued until 1839.



THE UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE AT CIRCLEVILLE.  
(BASEMENT OF THE CIRCLEVILLE CHURCH.)



THE UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE AT DAYTON IN 1854.  
FROM AN ENGRAVING IN THE "UNITY MAGAZINE."



He was succeeded by Rev. William Hanby ; and he, in 1845, by Rev. David Edwards. In 1849 Mr. Hanby again became editor, but in 1852 resigned this position to become publishing agent. In the latter year Rev. John Lawrence, who had been assistant editor since 1850, became editor. Since 1852 the following persons have been editors and assistant or associate editors respectively : *Editors*—Rev. John Lawrence, Rev. D. Berger, Rev. Milton Wright, Rev. William O. Tobey, A.M., James W. Hott, D.D., I. L. Kephart, D.D. *Assistant and Associate Editors*—Rev. William O. Tobey, A.M., Marion R. Drury, D.D.

## 2. *The Sunday-School Periodicals.*

The Sunday-school publications have grown to occupy a large place in the business of the House. Of the six English Sunday-school periodicals now published, the *Children's Friend* is the oldest, having been begun in 1854, with Bishop David Edwards as editor. The *Missionary Visitor* was established in 1865, with Rev. D. K. Flickinger, corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, as editor. In the summer of 1895 this paper was transferred to the Sunday-school department, its name being changed to the *Children's Visitor*. These have always been semimonthly papers, and together now furnish reading for every Sabbath in the year. They are small folios, and are profusely illustrated. The four periodicals comprising the lesson series—namely, *Our Bible Teacher*, *Our Bible-Lesson Quarterly*, *Our Intermediate Bible-Lesson Quarterly*, and *Lessons for the Little Ones*—had their origin in the International Sunday-School Lesson movement, beginning with 1873. *Lesson Leaves for the Sunday School* appeared on the 1st of January of that year, under the editorial management of Rev. D. Berger, and in 1882 developed into the *Intermediate Quarterly*. *Our Bible Teacher* was first published in April, 1873,

under the same editorial care. The first number of *Our Bible-Lesson Quarterly* was issued in January, 1879, and *Lessons for the Little Ones* has been published since April 2, 1876. All of these publications are familiar to the membership of the Church. Their combined circulation in July, 1896, was over three hundred and seventy thousand.

The following have been editors of the Sabbath-school literature: Bishop David Edwards, Rev. Alexander Owen, Rev. Solomon Vonnieda, Rev. D. Berger, Dr. J. W. Etter. The associate editors have been Dr. J. W. Etter and Dr. H. A. Thompson.

### 3. *The German Periodicals.*

The first German paper issued for the Church was undertaken as a private enterprise by John Russel, in 1840. It was called *Die Geschäftige Martha* (*The Busy Martha*), and was printed in Baltimore. In 1841 the General Conference assumed control of the paper, elected Jacob Erb as editor, and appointed three special trustees to take it in charge. Its career closed in one year afterward for want of support. In 1846 the publication was resumed, in Circleville, Ohio, with the name changed to *Der Deutsche Teleskop* (*The German Telescope*), and Nehemiah Altman as editor. Three years later it resumed its original name, the *Busy Martha*. In 1851 the name was once more changed, this time becoming *Der Fröhliche Botschafter* (*The Joyful Messenger*). This name is retained to the present. The editors of this paper have been the following: Rev. John Russel, Rev. Jacob Erb, Rev. N. Altman, Rev. David Strickler, Rev. Henry Staub, Rev. Julius Degmeier, Rev. Solomon Vonnieda, Rev. Ezekiel Light, Rev. William Mittendorf. Rev. Edward Lorenz is now in editorial charge.

The Sunday-school periodicals of the German department of the House deserve special mention. The first

of these is *Der Jugend Pilger* (*The Youth's Pilgrim*), established in 1870. In size and general character it is like the *Children's Friend*. For four years it was issued as a monthly. Since then it has been a semimonthly. In 1890 was begun the publication of a Sunday-school quarterly, called *Sonntagschul-Lectiōnen*. It contains twenty-four pages, with cover. These periodicals have always been under the same editorial care as *Der Fröhliche Botschafter*.

All of these papers are edited with much ability, and all deserve much larger circulation than is possible with the limited German membership of the Church. Relatively the German portion of the Church gives a far better support to its publications than the English membership does, and for this the Germans are worthy of all praise. Nevertheless, these periodicals have always been issued at a pecuniary loss to the House, the aggregate deficiency from the beginning being upwards of thirty-eight thousand dollars. But they are clearly a necessity to the Church, and their publication must be continued.

#### 4. *The Watchword.*

With the organization and rapid growth of the Young People's Christian Union there soon began to be felt a need for a periodical devoted especially to that interest. Numerous requests came to the General Conference of May, 1893, for such a publication, and the conference ordered that a paper be published, and elected Rev. H. F. Shupe as its editor. The first number of the *Young People's Watchword*, now called the *Watchword*, appeared on September 2 of that year. It is in handsome eight-page form, issued weekly, and well illustrated. It is a bright, cheery, and helpful paper, and is filling admirably an important mission to the Church. It is furnished at the price of one dollar a year.

5. *Magazine Literature.*

About the middle of the century much attention was given in the Church to the subject of personal holiness. It was for the promotion of this object that the *Unity Magazine*, a monthly magazine, at first called *Unity with God*, was started, by order of the General Conference of 1853. The first number was issued in November of that year. The subscription list gave slight promise of success, and the scope of the magazine was broadened. But it lived only a little over five years, its career closing with January, 1859. Its first editor was Bishop David Edwards. He was succeeded in 1857 by Rev. Alexander Owen. Each gave to the magazine fine ability and an earnest Christian tone. No attempt was ever made to revive this monthly.

In 1889 the General Conference decided to enter again the field of magazine literature, this time, however, aiming at a publication of a higher character, to be issued quarterly. Accordingly, in January, 1890, the first issue of the *Quarterly Review of the United Brethren in Christ*, with J. W. Etter, D.D., as its editor, made its appearance. In 1891 Dr. Etter was elected a professor in Union Biblical Seminary, and the work on the *Review* was shared with him by the other professors in the seminary. The General Conference of 1893 placed the magazine in the care of the professors, but with the last issue of that year its publication was discontinued, by order of the trustees of the House, because of insufficient support. Afterward an organization of ministers was formed, called "The Review Publishing Association," for the purpose of reviving the publication. Dr. G. M. Mathews became its managing editor, giving his service gratuitously, and thus it has continued to live. The *Review* from the beginning has been under excellent management, and has uniformly maintained a high character.



6. *Missionary Publications.*

Two other publications, both of most excellent character, and both devoted to the missionary work, are issued from the Publishing House, though not by the House itself. The first of these is the *Woman's Evangel*, a monthly published by the Woman's Missionary Association, and edited by its officers. The first number appeared in January, 1882. Mrs. L. R. Keister was editor from the beginning until 1893, and Mrs. L. K. Miller associate editor from 1888 to 1893. Upon the resignation of Mrs. Keister in the latter year, Mrs. Miller succeeded as editor.

The second of these publications is the *Search Light*, also a monthly, published by the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society, with the general secretary, William M. Bell, D.D., as editor, and the treasurer, William McKee, D.D., as associate. This paper is very attractive in appearance.

Both of these periodicals are conducted with discriminating zeal and judgment.

## VI. BOOK PUBLICATIONS.

An extensive list of books, theological, historical, biographical, and miscellaneous in character, many of them of a high order, have been published by the House. With these are included teachers' Bibles, of which very many thousands, in conjunction with two great publishing houses of another denomination, have been issued.

The first English hymn-book issued by the Publishing House under the order of the General Conference was compiled by H. G. Spayth, in 1849. This was superseded by a greatly improved collection ordered by the conference of 1857, which remained in use until 1873. The later hymn-books published, both for congregational and Sunday-school use, have taken high rank. In 1873 the

General Conference ordered the publication of a hymn-book with notes, and a committee was appointed to supervise the work. The preparation of it was committed to Rev. William H. Lanthurn, who, at the time and until his death in 1884, was at the head of the book department. The result was the excellent book entitled "Hymns for the Sanctuary," one of the very best books of its class. Later a demand arose for a smaller book with notes, with more immediate adaptation to revival and the general social services of the Church. The preparation of this work was committed to Rev. Edmund S. Lorenz, A.M., so well known to the Church as a music writer and publisher. And thus the "Otterbein Hymnal," which has proved so justly popular, was given to the Church. Sunday-school song-books of superior character have also from time to time been issued.

For a general view of the book publications of the House, the reader is referred to the "Manual of the United Brethren Publishing House, Historical and Descriptive."

#### VII. THE PUBLISHING AGENTS.

In the earlier years of the House the editors of the periodicals were also the publishing agents. In 1845 Nehemiah Altman was elected publisher. He held the office for seven years, during one of which, from 1846 to 1847, he was also German editor. Since 1853 the publishing agents have been as follows: 1853 to 1854, Rev. Solomon Vonnieda; a few months in 1854, Rev. Solomon Vonnieda and Henry Kumler, Jun.; 1855 to 1861, Rev. Solomon Vonnieda and Thomas N. Sowers; 1861 to 1864, Thomas N. Sowers and Jacob B. King; 1864 to 1865, Thomas N. Sowers and Rev. William J. Shuey; a few weeks in 1865, Rev. William J. Shuey and Thomas N. Sowers; 1865 to 1866, Revs. William J. Shuey and William McKee; 1866 to the present, Rev. William J. Shuey.

For nearly thirty-three years, or more than half the lifetime of the Publishing House, Mr. Shuey has stood at its head as general superintendent and financial manager. He was born in the town of Miamisburg, Ohio, ten miles from Dayton, on February 9, 1827. He was converted and became a member of the United Brethren Church in 1843. He joined the Miami Conference in 1848, and was ordained by Bishop Erb in 1851, entering in the latter year upon the duties of pastor. He served in this relation, and in that of presiding elder, until he entered the Publishing House, with the exception of making a trip to Africa, in company with Revs. D. C. Kumler and D. K. Flickinger, for the purpose of locating a mission. The idea of opening a mission somewhere in Africa was first proposed by him to the Board of Missions, at the session of 1854, and it was especially by his advocacy that the proposition was adopted by the board. He was also the first to suggest to the General Conference, at the session of 1869, the establishing of a central theological seminary for the Church, as will appear in these pages farther on.

Mr. Shuey first entered the House, as has been before stated, in June, 1864, as assistant publishing agent. The manner in which he addressed himself to the situation as then existing commended him to the favor of the General Conference of 1865, and he was elected publishing agent. The wisdom of this choice has been abundantly demonstrated through the years which have followed, and never more so than through the long and wearisome period of litigation, in which, while there were many to bear a portion of the burden, its principal weight, by the necessities of the situation, fell upon him.

In devoting himself to the management of the Publishing House, his life has necessarily been drawn away from the more direct work of the ministry, and, while he has

rendered the Church an invaluable service in this particular field, he has always regretted the necessity which separated him from his more immediate chosen life work. His strength in the pulpit, his wisdom as a counselor in the General and annual conferences, and his thorough interest in all that pertains to the growth and success of the Church in all her departments of work, are everywhere recognized.

#### VIII. SOME OF THE EDITORS.

Of a number of the men who have served in the relation of editors in the House mention has been made elsewhere, as Rhinehart, Hanby, Edwards, Wright, Hott, Russel, Erb, and Altman. Of others a brief mention must be made here.

One of the most popular of the long line was Rev. John Lawrence. Becoming assistant editor of the *Religious Telescope* in 1850 and editor in 1852, he was regularly elected by the General Conference in 1853, and resigned early in 1864, having served in the office about fourteen years. He became chaplain of a regiment in the War of the Rebellion, and remained afterward in Nashville, Tennessee, where he entered into the practice of law, continuing in that profession until his death, in 1889. He wrote with great fluency, and gave his readers many bright and breezy articles, but disappointed many by his failure to bring the paper to a high literary standard, and often by deficiency in well-matured thought. He wrote much against secret societies and slavery, and published a small volume on each of these subjects. He wrote also a history of the United Brethren Church, a work in which, as to style of writing, he appears at his best.

Rev. William Otterbein Tobey, A.M., was for eight years editorially connected with the *Religious Telescope*, four



years as joint editor with Milton Wright, and four years as assistant with Dr. J. W. Hott. He brought to his work fine abilities as a writer, but sympathized fully with the ultra-radicalism which controlled the *Telescope* during the first four years of his connection with it.

Dr. Marion R. Drury, born in 1849, a graduate of Western College and Union Biblical Seminary, became assistant editor of the *Religious Telescope* in 1881, serving eight years in that relation. In 1889 he was regularly elected by the General Conference as associate editor, a relation which he has continued to occupy to the present. He has proved himself as possessing true editorial instincts, is judicious, painstaking, and thorough. He apprehends quickly the salient points of any subject or situation, and rapidly presents to his readers the best things. The fact that he has almost completed four quadrennial terms of service, a longer period than any other person has ever served on the *Telescope*, is ample proof of his adaptation to editorial work.

Dr. Isaiah L. Kephart, born in 1832, a student in Otterbein University, professor of natural science in Western College, Iowa, in 1871, professor of mental and moral science in San Joaquin Valley College, California, in 1883, president of Westfield College in 1885-89, was elected editor of the *Religious Telescope* in 1889. Dr. Kephart entered easily upon the duties of an editor. He has succeeded in giving to the paper the high character in thought and type of expression which has commended it so strongly to its readers. During the turbulent years which followed the radical secession he conducted the paper with wisdom and in a manner to be greatly helpful to the Church. He is of cheerful temperament, always hopeful, trusting strongly in God's sovereignty over the affairs of men, and is a safe leader of the hosts of the Church through the medium through which he speaks to them each week.

The early editors of the German literature were Russel, Erb, Altman, David Strickler, and Solomon Vonnieda. Mr. Vonnieda was editor for seven years, from 1859 to 1866. Then succeeded Rev. Ezekiel Light, who edited the German literature from 1866 to 1869, and again from 1885 to 1889. He was again elected by the General Conference in 1893, but resigned immediately afterward to assume the chaplaincy of the National Military Home at Dayton. He proved himself a strong thinker and able writer. Dr. Light preferred the position he now occupies as being less confining, while equally laborious. He resides with his family in the pleasant residence provided for the chaplain by the Home government.

Rev. William Mittendorf was elected editor of the German periodicals in 1869, and continued to 1885, a period of sixteen years. He was again elected in 1889, serving to 1893, when, upon Dr. Light's resignation, he was immediately reëlected by the board of trustees, and continued until his death, in April, 1895, serving in all nearly twenty-two years as editor, the longest service, with a single exception, of all the editors in the history of the House. Mr. Mittendorf was born in Hanover, Germany, January 30, 1830. He was in high standing in the Ohio German Conference, and was elected a delegate to every General Conference from 1869 to 1893. During his editorial career he translated the essential portions of Lawrence's Church History into the German language, and assisted in compiling the German hymn-book now in use in the Church. He was an earnest and laborious worker, and, like his successor, was plentifully provided with work to do, having the editorial care of *Der Fröhliche Botschafter* (weekly), the *Jugend Pilger* (semimonthly), and the Sunday-school lesson quarterly.

Rev. Edward Lorenz, on the death of Mr. Mittendorf,

in the spring of 1895, was elected by the board of trustees as editor of the German publications, and entered at once upon the duties of the office. He sustains admirably the literary and religious tone of these periodicals.

In the spring of 1864, John Lawrence having resigned, D. Berger was appointed editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and was elected by the General Conference of 1865. In 1869 he was chosen editor of the the Sunday-school literature, and continued in this relation until 1893. In the latter year Dr. J. W. Etter was elected, but died in March, 1895. D. Berger was then again chosen, continuing to the present. He has occupied the editorial chair for twenty-six years, during twelve of which he was a member of the International Lesson Committee. In 1893 Dr. H. A. Thompson was elected associate editor, and continues to the present time.

#### IX. BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

The following trustees were elected by the General Conference of 1893: D. L. Rike, George Miller, D.D., John Dodds, D. W. Crider, Prof. R. J. White, Rev. W. O. Fries, Rev. A. C. Wilmore, E. R. Smith, M.D., and G. M. Mathews, D.D. After the death of D. L. Rike, in 1895, Prof. A. W. Drury was elected to fill the vacancy. Dr. G. M. Mathews is president of the board.

The House, as a whole, is a great hive of activity, employing in its various departments more than a hundred people, sending out annually a vast amount of wholesome literature, and is esteemed as one of the most solid of the business establishments of the flourishing city in which it is located.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HOME, FRONTIER, AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY AND ITS WORK

#### I. THE HOME AND FRONTIER FIELD.

THE United Brethren Church, as we have seen in these pages, had its origin in the latter half of the eighteenth century in a series of revival meetings conducted by Otterbein, Boehm, and others who became associated with them in their work, the occasion being the low state of spirituality which prevailed particularly in the churches with which they were connected. Their preaching was plain, spiritual, and practical, and they dwelt with great emphasis on the sinfulness and lost condition of men, and the necessity for repentance, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a present Saviour, and a conscious witness of the Holy Spirit to their regeneration and acceptance with God. Hence the Church soon became widely known for its insistence on these doctrines, as well as for its frequent and powerful revivals. With such preaching, such revivals, and a converted and spiritual membership, it was natural that an earnest missionary spirit should soon spring up. Every newly-converted soul was anxious to bring other souls into the same blessed experience. Many of those whose hearts were drawn out in earnest sympathy for others, as they poured forth the story of their own joyful experience, soon developed into preachers. With little pretense of scholastic culture, but with hearts grasping the great essentials of salvation, they spoke first to their neighbors on the great subject of their eternal welfare,



and then made visits to other places, sometimes at long distances, and rehearsed the same story. Thus they became true missionaries, sometimes sent out by councils of brethren, as were Barnabas and Saul at the first, but often going by their own motion, as Paul did subsequently on his great missionary journeys, or on some urgent call from a distant point, coming like the call from Macedonia to the great apostle, "Come over and help us." Journeys of hundreds of miles, and extending through weeks and even months, were thus made by these enthusiastic and devoted servants of God, whose only compensation was the souls they brought into the kingdom of Jesus.

But all this work, carried forward with such commendable zeal, and such immediate blessed results, was for many years without organization or system. The route which a preacher traveled over he might not follow up again for an interval of years, nor were others appointed to follow definitely in his track. The people who heard his word gladly, who gave their hearts to Christ, and often were gathered into small organized bands, or societies, might not see a minister again for long periods, or a minister of another denomination might come into the neighborhood, and gather them, with others, into another fold. These ministers in general were entirely unpaid in a pecuniary way, while the itinerant missionaries often gave but part of a year to the work.

This irregular and unsystematized method of doing missionary work was largely maintained up to the middle of the present century. The conferences indeed took the matter in hand, marked out mission fields within their bounds, or in regions adjacent to their territory, appointed home missionaries to these fields, and collected funds on the various charges for their partial support. And, in justice, it must be said that, with all the disadvantages

under which they labored, they accomplished a magnificent work. The Church had extended its work far to the westward from the original territory which it occupied in its earlier years in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The great States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, and portions of Michigan, were netted over with conferences and flourishing societies before the general Missionary Society of the Church was organized. But the experience of the fathers of the first half of the century, the grave difficulties and disadvantages under which they carried forward their work, taught them the need of some form of effective organization, some centralized agency through which the work could be more efficiently directed, and through whose appeal to the Church a larger liberality could be awakened, or through which wise and definite direction could be given to the liberality which had already been quickened for ready response to the Lord's call. It was a great step forward, therefore, when the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society was organized by the General Conference of May, 1853.

It should be noted here that previous to this, while the annual conferences, whose work was now conducted in the use of the English language, were pushing their work far beyond their own boundaries, the Germans were also actively engaged in missionary enterprises. They organized a number of congregations, chiefly among European Germans, in the cities of Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, and were vigorously prosecuting their work. While thus engaged they received a limited support from the conferences, but most of them performed their labor at heavy personal sacrifice. When the General Conference of 1853 assembled, this work was in a healthy and growing condition, and was properly recognized and organized as the Ohio German Conference.

The Sandusky Conference, which was begun in 1829 by ministers from the Muskingum Conference, had grown to large proportions by the time of the meeting of the General Conference of 1853. A noble body of ministers, earnest, progressive, looking well to the future of the Church, were at work in this conference. They had succeeded in building a conference which, in numbers, intelligence, enterprise, and wealth, stood among the foremost in the Church. Among this band of ministers was the Rev. J. C. Bright, a man whose heart God touched with the fire of a true missionary spirit. Under his inspiration the conference took an active part in those measures which led up to the organization of the general Missionary Society. At the annual session of 1852 a committee, with Mr. Bright as its chairman, made in substance the following report on missions, the report being unanimously adopted by the conference :

1. That the time has fully come when the United Brethren Church should unite her whole strength in a missionary society, which shall include not only the home, but also the frontier and foreign, fields within the sphere of its labors.

2. That the Sandusky Conference organize itself into a branch missionary society, with the prayer that the General Conference may form a general society, of which each annual conference may be a branch.

3. That the payment of one dollar shall constitute a person a member of the society for one year, ten dollars a life member, and fifty dollars a life director.

4. That our brethren be entreated to exercise the most prayerful thought and careful inquiry into the wants of the nominally Christian, and especially the heathen, world, that their views may be enlarged in regard to the magnitude of the work devolving upon the Christian church, in fulfilling the commission given by our Saviour on the mount just before his ascension.

It should be observed here that the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society is intended to be, as it also is, the aggregate missionary working force of the whole Church,

each annual conference being an integral part or branch of the parent society. The reader is referred to the constitution of the society, found in the Church Discipline, for an explicit statement of the plans and methods by which its work is carried forward. This constitution, which, it is understood, was originally drawn by the hand of Mr. Bright, was subjected to but very slight alteration from the time of its adoption by the General Conference of 1853 until the conference of 1881, a period of twenty-eight years. And if the reader has followed closely the form of the Sandusky Conference resolutions he will not wonder that when the General Conference came to elect its first corresponding secretary the choice fell upon John C. Bright. He was a man of marked abilities, of great zeal, and thoroughly qualified for the duties of the position, then new to the Church, and he soon infused into the hearts of hundreds of ministers and laymen the spirit which so strongly actuated his own heart in this department of work. Rev. John Kemp was elected the first general treasurer of the society. The following were then elected to constitute, with the secretary and treasurer, a board of management: Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner, senior bishop, president; Bishops Henry Kumler, Jun., David Edwards, and Lewis Davis, vice-presidents; Revs. William Longstreet, Daniel Shuck, and D. B. Crouse, and Messrs. T. N. Sowers and John Dodds. Thus organized, the Board of Missions was now ready to begin active and aggressive work.

At this time, in 1853, there were in the Church fourteen annual conferences, namely, the Pennsylvania, East Pennsylvania, Virginia, Allegheny, Scioto, Miami, Muskingum, Sandusky, Illinois, Wabash, Indiana, White River, St. Joseph, and Iowa. The church membership scarcely aggregated a full fifty thousand. Of ministers



there were about four hundred in the itinerant ranks and about three hundred local. Four conferences, however, as we have seen, were organized by the General Conference of 1853, namely, the Ohio German, the Michigan, the Auglaize, and the Des Moines, the latter by separation from the Iowa. The ministers and membership in these new conferences were included in the statistical estimates just given.

About this time the Church entered upon a new period of activity. The educational spirit, as elsewhere seen in these pages, was asserting itself in the founding of colleges, and the missionary spirit was reaching out into new fields, and many new outposts of the Church were being established. At the very time when the General Conference of 1853 was in session, a colony of United Brethren from Indiana had entered upon its long and wearisome journey to Oregon. This new territory had then but recently been opened to immigration, and these pioneers started for this distant land of promise not only to seek homes for themselves and their families, but also to establish in that new country the Church which they loved. The colonists were under the leadership of Revs. T. J. Connor and J. Kenoyer, men who gave themselves a cheerful offering for this service. The route overland, most of the way through territories where the faces of white men were then but seldom seen, was attended with much difficulty and hardship. But the journey over the hot and dreary plains and through the dangerous mountain passes was at last accomplished, and the courageous pioneers in due time laid the foundations for the Oregon Conference, and the beginnings of the work in the extreme northwestern section of the United States. The ministers immediately began preaching to their neighbors, and made visits for this purpose to neighboring districts as

often as their straitened circumstances would permit. The divine blessing rested upon their work, regular appointments were established and classes formed, the ministerial force was enlarged, and two years later, in 1855, the Oregon Conference was organized. In the absence of any regular bishop, Mr. Connor presided as bishop *pro tempore*. By this time they had formed societies in Yam Hill, Polk, Marion, Benton, Linn, Lane, and Umpqua counties, and had made frequent prospecting tours to regions beyond.

We have seen elsewhere in these pages<sup>1</sup> that as early as 1825 Rev. Jacob Erb, afterward Bishop Erb, made a visit to Canada. This was in company with J. Christian Smith, the two visiting and preaching at various points, including also northwestern New York. This prospecting tour was undertaken on their own responsibility. Two years later, in 1827, Mr. Erb was appointed to travel a mission, in the same regions, called the "New York Mission." He was then a young man, having joined the conference just four years previously. But he undertook the work with true zeal, traveling often long distances on foot. The Master, who said, "Lo, I am with you alway," put his blessing upon the labors of the young missionary, and many converts were numbered among those who heard his words. The conference of which Mr. Erb was a member was the original conference of the Church, no division of the work having yet been made in the East. Occasional subsequent visits were made by Mr. Erb to this field, but the work received no regular attention until 1853, and many of those whom he had gathered together found their way into other communions. In the year 1853 Bishop Erb visited Canada again, and was soon afterward followed by Israel Sloane, of the Scioto Conference, who was sent by the Missionary Board. Mr.

<sup>1</sup> P. 273; see also Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., pp. 226, 227.

Sloane's work proved very successful, and three years later had so far grown that Bishop Glossbrenner organized the Canada, now Ontario, Conference, with six itinerant ministers, and something over one hundred and fifty members.

The impulse given to the missionary work by the organization of the society in 1853 was felt in many directions, among them that of southwestern Missouri. This region was visited by Bishop Henry Kumler, Jun., and Rev. Josiah Terrell in that year. They preached the word in many localities, and organized a number of societies, forming what was then known as the Southwest District. In 1854 the work had so far grown that Bishop Edwards organized it into a mission conference. Annual sessions were held until 1859, when the excesses of border ruffianism had become so formidable that the work was permitted to decline, and no further sessions were held until after the close of the War. The strong antislavery principles of the Church made it perilous for our ministers and people in that part of Missouri when the determination to carry slavery into Kansas had become, among the proslavery classes, a violent and murderous frenzy.

About the same time the Missionary Board began to direct its operations also into Kansas, that fertile country lying west of Missouri, into which, in 1854, emigration was beginning to pour its tide of new settlers. The country had then just been opened up for occupancy, and its inviting fields presented a strong attraction to people who were seeking for new homes in the West. The settlers were mostly from the free States of the North, and their purpose was to build up a strong, free commonwealth to add to the great sisterhood of States. Others were from the South, and were equally determined that Kansas should become a slave State. At that period there

was on the part of the supporters of slavery throughout the South an intense determination to press the institution into every possible available foot of territory. The famous fugitive-slave law, whose passage by Congress they had secured, and which for a series of years dishonored our national statutes, degraded every citizen of the North to the position of a slave-catcher, if his service should be called for, with fines and imprisonment if he declined to obey. In national politics the extension of slavery into new Territories, or its restriction to the States in which it then existed, and its final complete abolition, was the subject of incessant and bitter contention. It was the agitation of these questions which led to the great War of the Rebellion and the overthrow of the institution. But before this colossal conflict was fully precipitated there was for some years a preliminary border war between the settlers from the Northern States and those from the South, the latter being supported by armed raiders from Missouri, who sought by intimidation and frequent assassination to force slavery into this then new Territory.

It was under these circumstances that the Rev. W. A. Cardwell, of the White River Conference, Indiana, appeared as the first missionary of the United Brethren Church, establishing his home near Lecompton. Here also the first class was formed and the first church built. He was soon reinforced by the arrival of other missionaries sent out by the board. These were Samuel S. Snyder, of the Allegheny Conference, who settled near Lawrence; not long after, J. S. Gingerich, also of the Allegheny, and next Josiah Terrell, of the White River Conference. In 1855, Mr. Bright, referring to the troubles which prevailed, wrote: "The political sky in Kansas is cloudy at present, but freedom must in the end prevail. If Kansas should



ever be a slave State, we ought not to abandon it. The gospel of Christ is light, and wherever the dark cloud of slavery is spread, there the light should be diffused. Through sore troubles and persecutions our brethren continue to prosecute their work, frequently mobbed, waylaid, shot at, threatened, troubled on every side, but not in despair." Bravely they held their ground, their work enlarging in their hands. In October, 1857, Bishop Edwards, by previous appointment, visited them, and on the 30th of the month organized the Kansas Conference. Other helpers had by this time joined, and the names of nine itinerants were enrolled, and nearly two hundred lay members were reported.

The work under the care of the Missionary Board in southwestern Missouri was for a time suspended, on account of the perils attending its prosecution, but that in the northwestern part of the State was pushed forward with added vigor, by ministers from the Des Moines Conference, Iowa. The General Conference of 1857 accordingly instructed Bishop Edwards to organize a conference in that part of the State, and he held the initial session of the Missouri Conference in the fall of 1858. Three hundred and fifty-eight members were reported, and the names of nine ministers enrolled. A second session was held in the spring of 1859, when the number of members had increased to eight hundred and nine. It was the beginning of a good work, which has increased in solidity ever since.

In Wisconsin the Rev. G. G. Nickey and others had begun work, and had succeeded in organizing a number of congregations. Regular quarterly conferences were held, and a vigorous and hopeful church life was springing up. The work having been brought to the attention of the General Conference of 1857, that body directed Bishop

Lewis Davis to organize it into a mission conference, and that the Missionary Board make proper provisions for its further prosecution. The Wisconsin Conference was accordingly organized in 1858, with twenty-one preachers and five hundred and fifty-four members.

The General Conference of 1857 also extended special recognition to the Kentucky Conference, which had been organized in 1850, by directing that it be placed under the care of the Missionary Board, and at the same time also the board took under its care the Parkersburg Conference, the General Conference having separated its territory from the Virginia Conference. Parkersburg was organized as a separate conference in 1857. And to these is yet to be added the Minnesota Conference, organized by Bishop Davis in the fall of 1857.

It will thus be seen that in the first four years following the organization of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society not less than nine annual conferences were added, or ready to be added, to the Church, namely, the Oregon, Canada, Southern Missouri, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Parkersburg, and Kentucky. All these were recognized as mission conferences, and received support in greater or less degree from the funds of the society.

## II. THE MISSION IN AFRICA.

The mission work thus far spoken of was limited to the United States and Territories and the Dominion of Canada. Previous to the organization of the general Missionary Board, in 1853, no work in any foreign country was undertaken by the Church. A most important forward step was therefore soon to be taken whereby the Church was to be placed in line with other churches in the work of giving the gospel of Jesus to the heathen world. The first annual meeting of the Board of Mis-

sions was therefore to be an initial assembling in more than one sense. The meeting was held on June 1, 1854, at Westerville, Ohio. The members of the board, new to the responsibility which the General Conference had laid upon them, assembled with anxious prayer for divine direction during their session. And never since the day when at Antioch the Spirit said to the church, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," was the leading of the Spirit more manifestly present than when the unanimous impulse was awakened in the hearts of these men, and the resolution fixed upon, to begin somewhere among the heathen the work of a Christian mission. It was a very brief resolution in which, after full deliberation, they gave expression to this high purpose:

*Resolved*, That we send one or more missionaries to Africa as soon as possible.

Scarcely more than a dozen words were sufficient, but, like that divine utterance at the beginning, "Let there be light!" they were laden with a great meaning, and were the first dawning of that blessed illumination which now shines with so bright a radiance in those lands to which the missionaries were sent. The question as to the country in which the Church should begin a mission was fully canvassed, and Africa was chosen as being the most deeply sunk in the darkness of heathenism and the most neglected by the Christian world.

Among those whose hearts God had touched with the missionary impulse in advance of this meeting of the board was the Rev. William J. Shuey, of the Miami Conference, then a young man in the earlier years of his ministry, an able preacher and full of spiritual fervor, a man whose name was destined to become familiar to the Church through a long series of years in connection with another

of her most important departments of work. He was chosen by the board to become the first missionary of the Church to Africa. He was charged with the special duty of selecting and locating a mission, rather than that of remaining as a permanent laborer in the field. The board instructed its executive committee to choose other missionaries to accompany Mr. Shuey in the work. Not long afterward the committee appointed Rev. D. C. Kummer, M.D., and Rev. D. K. Flickinger, both of the Miami Conference, as Mr. Shuey's associates. Just forty-two years ago, in the month of January, 1855, these first foreign missionaries of the Church set sail from New York in a small vessel for their distant destination. After a voyage of thirty-four days, on February 26 they arrived at Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa.

The missionaries remained a few days at Freetown for rest and observation. They soon found that they were indeed in a heathen land, though civilization and Christianization had here begun to do their work. They found abundant work here waiting to be done, but not wishing to build on another's foundation, or to reap where others had sown, they determined to seek a field where the gospel of Jesus had never been heard of, to bring light where men sat in the utter darkness of heathenism. In order to acquaint themselves with the general situation, so as to be able to select wisely, they then started on a voyage southward along the coast for Good Hope Station, on Sherbro Island, about one hundred and twenty miles from Freetown. At this point the American Missionary Association (Congregational) had been for some years operating a mission. They were here received with the utmost cordiality and kindness, and the counsels of the missionaries stationed here further proved of great value to them. From this point they made numerous expeditions, both



along the coast and up some of the rivers, with the view of finding a site that should offer the greatest advantages as a starting-point for a mission, and in time a headquarters from which to work a larger field. They felt that the choice of location must not be made hastily, since so much depended on the wisdom and care with which it should be made. Among the many places visited was Mokelli, a town situated on the Jong River, about sixty miles from the coast, and having a population of about five or six hundred. Contiguous to it were other towns, making within a small circuit a population of two thousand or more. The climate and healthfulness, with all other conditions, seemed to mark this as the most favorable spot they had found, and, taking all things into account, they decided to locate the mission at this place, and commence work as soon as possible. The next step to take was to secure land for a building and other uses of a mission, and for this purpose it was important to get a written title duly signed by the headman, or chief, of the tribe. The chief, or king, was seen, and the terms of a bargain were agreed upon, and a properly executed title was promised. But African chiefs are proverbially slow in a matter of this kind, and before all the proceedings were concluded the missionaries left for Freetown. It was understood, however, that Mr. Flickinger would return to Mokelli to complete the negotiations. The matter of the location being, as was believed, settled, Mr. Shuey felt that he had accomplished the service with which he was charged, and Dr. Kumler having become a victim to the dreaded African fever, it was deemed advisable that they two should return to America, leaving Mr. Flickinger to prosecute further the work for which the way had been so far prepared.

After their departure Mr. Flickinger returned to Good

Hope Station, where, soon after, in the month of July, he was attacked by the African fever, and greatly disabled for a long period. After partial recovery he preached often to the native congregation at Good Hope, and also made frequent tours to various outlying points, preaching to the natives the gospel of Christ, and also acquainting himself more perfectly with the aspects of different places. And now the tardiness of the wily Mokelli chief in signing a deed of conveyance proved that a serious mistake had been made. Mr. Flickinger, learning subsequently that a considerable portion of the year the river Jong was not navigable, and that access to the town from the coast was difficult and necessarily dangerous, and having made a visit to Shaingay and noted the advantages which it presented, determined upon a change of location for the mission. The wisdom of this determination has since become very manifest, since Shaingay presents, with convenience of access, as healthful a position as may be found anywhere along the coast. After much delay, indeed not until after Mr. Flickinger's return to America, and his second visit to Africa, was a title to this situation secured. This point has since become the entrance way to all our missionary operations in Africa—the Antioch of the Church in reaching the heathen fields beyond.

On his second trip, entered upon early in January, 1857, Mr. Flickinger was accompanied by William Barton Witt, M.D., of Cincinnati, and Rev. J. K. Billheimer, a young man of the Virginia Conference. Dr. Witt was an able and consecrated physician, and Mr. Billheimer was a man of fervent spirit, who gave himself without reserve to the work. The appointment of these men gave great satisfaction to the Church at home. Dr. Witt's stay in Africa was unavoidably abridged, his return to America after a year and a half of service being necessitated by broken

health in consequence of repeated attacks of the fateful African fever. Mr. Billheimer remained to give first two years and afterward several additional years of devoted labor to the work. Mr. Flickinger soon returned to America, and was elected by the General Conference of May, 1857, to the office of corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, Mr. Bright's health having so far failed as to make further service for him impossible.

After an absence of about nine months Mr. Billheimer was again on the field, now to complete the mission building, the erection of which he had previously begun. Rev. J. A. Williams, a native convert from Freetown, in whose charge he had left the mission during his return to America, assisted him greatly in this work. And now, the house being ready for use, with two rooms for living and a larger room for chapel and school uses, Mr. Billheimer entered again upon the work with new inspiration and hope. A few years later another visit to America became imperative for the recuperation of broken health. When he started a third time for his chosen field, in October, 1862, he took with him a companion and sharer in his toils, having married Miss Amanda L. Hanby, a daughter of Ex-Bishop Hanby. Mrs. Billheimer possessed recognized fitness for missionary work, and was duly appointed to the work by the Missionary Board.

Meanwhile, the work had begun to bear fruit among the native heathen. With the erection of the mission-house interested audiences were gathered into its chapel. Among these some listened with appreciation to the gospel message. Among the early converts was Lucy, a daughter of Chief Caulker. The king, though he had given a title for the ground on which the mission-house was erected, was utterly out of sympathy with the objects of the mission, and indeed did all he could to hinder its work. He and his

wife bitterly opposed Lucy in becoming a Christian. She, however, was resolute in her purpose, and remained faithful to the religion she espoused. Some years later, in 1871, the king himself laid down his opposition, and died an avowed and sincere Christian.

In 1860 the Board of Missions sought again to strengthen the hands of Mr. Billheimer by sending out the Rev. C. O. Wilson. He arrived at Freetown in November. He remained only a few months, when he was stricken down with the fever while on a business trip to Freetown. On his partial recovery his physician insisted upon his immediate return to America as the only hope of preserving his life. He obeyed the order, and reluctantly returned. Then, lest complaint be made of the useless expenditure of money by the board, he paid out of his own purse all the expenses incurred.

Mr. Billheimer's third visit to Africa was not to continue for more than about a year and a half. After toiling hopelessly for a while both he and his wife were disabled by the fever, which has destroyed the lives of so many missionaries, but of which so few of those sent out by the United Brethren Church have died. After a long period of utter prostration there seemed to be nothing left to do except to return to America, Mr. Billheimer, especially, feeling that his work in Africa was done. They arrived at home in May, 1864.

Other laborers, as time passed, were raised up. Among these were Rev. O. Hadley, of the St. Joseph Conference, and his wife. They set sail for Africa in October, 1866. After two and a half years of faithful service they returned home in the spring of 1869. Mr. Hadley was in delicate health before going to the mission, and died soon after their return, at their home near Lafayette, Indiana.

Fourteen years had now passed since the first mission-



aries sent out by the board had landed in Africa. They were years of interest, of anxiety, of high hopes, and much disappointment. A number of missionaries had been sent out, followed by the earnest prayers of the Church, and now in the spring of 1869 not one of the number was left on the field, the mission being again committed to that faithful native Christian minister, Rev. J. A. Williams. At this time many in the Church despaired of the final success of the mission, and some in high places began to entertain the thought of leaving it to other hands. It was in May of that year that the General Conference assembled at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and it is to be recorded that, as expressing the loss of hope for the mission, a resolution was actually introduced in that body proposing its discontinuance. The resolution was anxiously discussed, and, to the honor of the conference be it said, it was voted down almost unanimously.

But now a brighter day was at hand. The Lord honored the faith which triumphed in the day of darkness. In the city of Dayton, Ohio, in the Third United Brethren Church (colored), was a humble layman, intelligent, possessing sound judgment, a sincere Christian, a porter in a carpet store, Mr. Joseph Gomer, of pure African descent. The Lord placed the seal of his Spirit upon this man, and called him, with his excellent wife, to this work among their kinsmen after the flesh. They responded to the call, were duly consecrated to the service, and after the preparation of a suitable outfit they started for the great work to which God so manifestly called them. They sailed from New York in December, 1870. Their advent to the mission marked the beginning of a new era. Mr. and Mrs. Gomer soon found the way to the hearts of the people. The work began to enlarge under their hands. Preaching places multiplied, and native helpers arose from

among the converts. A long period of service lay before them, and before Mr. Gomer's death converts were numbered by thousands, and an organized annual conference of preachers was holding its yearly sessions. Mr. Gomer made his last visit to America in 1889, attending the General Conference at York, Pennsylvania. He returned to Africa, dying on the field in September, 1892, at the age of about sixty-five years. Mr. Gomer acquired wide influence among the native African tribes, frequently acting as umpire in their differences, and sometimes even settling wars between opposing chiefs. Mrs. Gomer died in December, 1896, at Dayton, Ohio.

In the year 1883 a proposition from the American Missionary Association to transfer to the care of our board the Avery and Good Hope mission stations for five years was received and considered by our board. The proposition included the annual payment of five thousand dollars to our board for the service to be rendered. It also carried with it the pledge of ten thousand dollars, given by a generous friend in England, to be expended in the building or purchase of a small steamer for the use of our mission in Africa. The proposition was accepted by our board, and for the period named these stations were operated by our board. The steamer also was built and sent to Africa. The latter proved rather a costly experiment. In the absence of skilled engineers and mechanics, to run the boat or make repairs when needed, the boat was used at great disadvantage, and after a while abandoned as a mission boat. On January 1, 1889, the annuity ceased, but the Avery and Good Hope stations have been left under the care of our board.

In 1883 Revs. J. M. Lesher and W. S. Sage and their wives were added by the board to the missionary force in Africa. These appointments were made partly on account of the increased responsibility of the board by having

accepted the proposition of the American Board to supply the stations just spoken of. They reached Shaingay on the 6th of October of that year, and rendered valuable service to the mission during their stay of nearly three years. A portion of this time marked a very rapid advance in gaining converts from heathenism. In 1885 the church membership of the mission numbered 1,526. In 1886 this number had increased to 2,629.

Among the most useful servants of the mission work was Tom Tucker, one of the first converts under Mr. Billheimer, reclaimed from heathenism at the same time with Lucy Caulker. He became not only efficient in business matters, but also a useful preacher. Finally, while he was serving as pastor of one of the stations, the Master's call came, and this good man went to his reward. Among his last words were these: "I am ready to die and go to reign with my Saviour. I feel that God is with me all the time." His death occurred September 13, 1885.

In the year 1886 the results of the mission work were partially summed up in the corresponding secretary's annual report to the board at its meeting in May. There were nine native preachers, four of whom had received regular ordination. Added to these were fifty-three lay workers, making a total native force of sixty-two. Two hundred and fifty-seven towns were on the list of the places statedly visited. The natives paid for the year then closed two hundred and forty-six dollars for the support of the work. The lay membership, we have just seen, was 2,629.

Other workers have given various periods of service to the mission in Africa. Among the most efficient of these is Rev. L. O. Burtner, who was appointed superintendent of the mission in May, 1892. His wife, a daughter of Dr. E. Light, chaplain of the National Soldiers' Home

at Dayton, Ohio, was appointed to the mission with him. Mr. Burtner saw early the importance of teaching the native converts self-reliance and self-dependence, and resolved that as far as lay in his power he would enforce this as a duty. The general policy hitherto had been to supply to too great an extent the needs of the mission by help from America. He found it a slow and difficult task to enforce this principle, remarking in his latest report to the board :

“It was apparent to me from the beginning of my oversight of the missions that a change of policy was necessary in order to secure greater progress. The rule was that those employed on the mission depended on it for almost everything. I at once sought to instill the idea of self-support in missions, and directed my efforts at first along the line of church erection. It required one year for the people to be assured that I would not build and keep in repair their native chapels. It took another year for them to learn that they could do it themselves, and a third year to go to work and do it. Last year we witnessed the completion of four native chapels, and this year one of stone foundation, hard-wood frame, and iron roof is being built, and will be ready by January next. We also require the people at all out-stations to clothe and feed their children and supply them with school-books. In short, our present policy is not to do anything for the people which they can and ought to do for themselves. Self-reliance greatly increases their desire and capacity to do for themselves.”

Better words than these could not be spoken in regard to the policy which ought to be pursued. Perhaps the most serious fault of earlier administrations of the work in Africa was that of doing too much for the converts in material things, instead of teaching them how to do for themselves, and insisting upon it that they must do it.



At the present time the membership under the care of the general Board of Missions, together with that of the missions of the Woman's Missionary Association, as included in the African conference, is about six thousand souls, with seventeen itinerant preachers. In the missions of the parent board there are seven schools, ranging in attendance of pupils from twenty to one hundred and fifty, or about four hundred pupils in all. In this the Rufus Clark and Wife Training School is not included. The superintendency of the missions is at this time intrusted to Rev. J. R. King, Mr. Burtner and his wife having returned to America to recruit failing health.

### *The Training School.*

Among the most useful aids for the prosecution of the mission work in Africa is the Rufus Clark and Wife Theological Training School, established at Shaingay, through the munificence of Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Clark, of Denver, Colorado. There had long been a serious need for a school of a higher grade for the training of native preachers and teachers. In a limited way this work was undertaken in America. But it was plainly impracticable, on account of expense, as well as for other reasons, to bring to this country for suitable education a sufficient number of men to meet the requirements of the work. The gift of the sum of five thousand dollars by Mr. and Mrs. Clark, in 1886, was most opportune. A building of stone, sixty-six feet in length by thirty-one in width, and two stories high, was in due time erected, and the school was opened on February 21, 1887, with eight students, three of whom were in the department of theology. Five years later sixteen students were enrolled in the training department, with a large contingent in the common branches of study. It is a fact of special

interest that a large part of the stone used in this building, including the corner-stone, came from the old abandoned slave pens of John Newton, on Plantain Island, three miles distant. Mr. Newton, it will be remembered, was once a noted slave-trader, and after his conversion became a distinguished minister of the gospel. All the stone for the building was generously donated by Chief Neal Caulker, an ardent friend of the mission. The first principal of the school was Rev. D. F. Wilberforce, M.D., a native-born African, who was educated in Dayton, Ohio, by the Board of Missions. Mr. Wilberforce having resigned in 1893, Rev. A. T. Howard was made principal in 1894. An excellent school at Bonthe, under the care of the board, numbers about one hundred and twenty-five pupils.

#### *A Home of Rest.*

The long ocean voyage to the home land for missionaries requiring temporary cessation from labor has been a serious obstacle to taking needed rest in time. This difficulty is happily in process of removal. Two years ago Bishop Hott, on returning from an episcopal visit to Africa, urged the importance of providing for the missionaries a home of rest on the mountain range overlooking Freetown and the Atlantic Ocean. It was proposed to build a house costing from twenty-two hundred to twenty-five hundred dollars. The proposition at once met with favor, and the general board and the woman's board uniting in the enterprise, the raising of funds was soon accomplished. The building is now nearing completion, the stone for its construction being obtained on the mountain. Mount Leicester is sufficiently elevated to be above the malarial range, and the atmosphere is thoroughly healthful and stimulating. The beauty and healthfulness of the spot has attracted the attention of other mission boards, and several

such homes are already erected there. The work is under the superintendence of J. R. King of the general board, and L. A. McGrew of the woman's board. The advantages of having such a home near at hand, to which the fever-stricken and worn laborers may retire for a while for rest and recuperation, are manifest, and this place will doubtless prove to our missionaries a blessing of inestimable value.

### III. THE MISSION IN GERMANY.

In the spring of 1869, when so many despaired of the future of the mission work in Africa, and even the General Conference entertained for discussion a proposition to abandon the field, a new light suddenly shone forth. The eclipse of faith was ended, and, instead of abandoning the work among the benighted heathen, a proposition was made, before the new board then chosen, to organize a mission in Germany. The German delegates to the General Conference were especially earnest in urging that missionaries be sent to the Fatherland, who should bring to its people the living spirit of a true evangelicism. The proposition was favorably entertained, and Rev. C. Bischoff, of Zanesville, Ohio, was appointed the first United Brethren missionary to Germany. Mr. Bischoff made early preparations for a departure for his field. He began work, and during the first year of his service he gathered about one hundred members into his fold. This mission has been productive of most gratifying results.

### IV. THE MISSION IN JAPAN.

The latest work undertaken by the Board of Missions is the founding of a mission in Japan. At the meeting of the board in May, 1895, the question of establishing a mission in some new foreign field was under consideration. China and Japan were proposed as offering inviting fields.

Upon voting, the result was practically unanimous for Japan. While the question was thus considered and decided, the Lord was providentially preparing the workmen who should be the first to enter the new field. One of these was George K. Irie, who had been for several years in America, and was then pursuing post-graduate studies at Lebanon Valley College. Mr. Irie is a native-born Japanese, possessing superior intelligence, a winning address, and fine social standing in Japan. His grade upon examination at the close of the college year entitled him to the degree of doctor of philosophy, which was awarded him. At the session of the Miami Conference in Dayton, in September following, 1895, he was, upon due examination in Christian doctrine, admitted to membership, and licensed to preach the gospel of Christ. Dr. Irie was appointed by the board to the charge of opening a mission in Japan. With Dr. Irie during his stay in Dayton was Mr. U. Yonayama, also a converted Japanese, and a young man of large promise. He was authorized to assist in the work of the proposed mission. These young men left America full of faith in the gospel of Jesus as the means of salvation to their people. Upon reaching their native land the Lord soon placed before them an open door. They found many willing to hear their message, and the work has proceeded most encouragingly.

But the Lord also soon raised up others to join them in their work. Among these may be mentioned Rev. S. Doi, now actively at work in Tokio; Rev. M. Okamoto, for a short time pastor of the First United Brethren Church in Tokio; and five or more others, of whom some are student preachers—young men in the schools, but beginning to preach the gospel of Christ. Mr. Okamoto had an interesting American history. The well-known missionary journal, *The Gospel in All Lands*, says of him that several



years ago he was converted in the little Japanese mission in Oakland, California. He was then in training for a business career, but the Spirit of God called him to another sphere. In a few months he was found preaching the gospel in Victoria, British Columbia. Here he learned that at Port Simpson, six hundred miles to the north, on the borders of Alaska, there was a colony of Japanese for whom nobody cared. He took shipping at the opening of winter for this point, preached to them the gospel of Christ, and won scores to the Christian faith. Returning, he resumed his work at Victoria, preaching also at Union, Fraser River, and Vancouver, forming at each place a mission church. He toiled through these years in great privation, being without a salary, and receiving only occasional means of support. Pulmonary trouble drove him south to a milder climate, and later, his life being despaired of, friends in San Francisco sent him back to Japan. For a time his health improved, and he was able to do hard work. Dr. Irie, who knew him in America, in conjunction with his fellow-laborers appointed him pastor of the First Church in Tokio. After a short period of faithful service his health declined again, and on the 30th of November, 1896, he passed on to receive his crown.

The first missionaries appointed by our board to Japan arrived in that country on November 10, 1895. A little time was required to arrange for the work, and they date the real beginning with the opening of 1896. Their success has been quite remarkable. The following from a letter from Dr. Irie to Dr. Bell, the missionary secretary, under date of October 13, 1896, reporting the plans and appointments for further work, has much the appearance of a familiar stationing-committee's report :

*Tokio.*—The First Church, M. Okamoto ; Asakusa, K. Okada ; Homjo, supplied by S. Tashiro ; Kanda, supplied by A. Nakagawa.

*Shigaken*.—Kusatsu and Moriyama, S. Doi; Hachiman, Minakuchi, and Otsu (capital of Shigaken), to be opened as soon as money is provided.

*Shizuokaken*.—Shizuoka and Hamamatsu, two men will be appointed as soon as possible.

Thus does this work in that far-off land beyond the seas open, under the blessing of God, with the most cheering promise. Dr. Bell about a year ago made a kind of episcopal visit to the mission, and found everything full of encouragement. He was received everywhere with open doors and open hearts, and returned full of faith and hope for the future of the mission so auspiciously begun.

#### V. CHANGE IN ORGANIZATION.

The General Conference of 1893 made a very important change in the form of organization of the Missionary Board, by which each annual conference is permitted to choose a member in addition to those elected by the General Conference, such members possessing equal privileges in the board with those elected by the higher body.

A most excellent monthly periodical, the *Search Light*, is published by the Missionary Society, edited by its executive officers, Drs. Bell and McKee.

#### VI. SUMMARY.

Eleven conferences are at the present time classed as mission conferences, and receive aid from the board. Aid is also given directly to individual mission churches in cities in twenty-three other conferences. To this are to be added two conferences in the foreign field, in Africa and Germany, and the work in Japan.

The total amount of money collected and expended by the Missionary Board since its organization, in 1853, according to the latest figures available at this writing, is \$3,636,319.19. Of this amount there has been expended for the mission in

Africa, \$281,181.04; in Germany, \$64,181.14; in Japan, \$4,530.80. In addition, the board has received as sacred or permanent fund \$92,048.36. In the same period there have been collected for the home and frontier fields, and expended by the annual conferences within their own conference districts, sums estimated to reach an aggregate of \$1,363,680.81, making the grand total of moneys collected for the missionary work since 1853 \$5,000,000. This does not include the further amounts raised through the agency of the Woman's Missionary Association.

#### VII. GENERAL OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

We have already seen that Rev. J. C. Bright was practically the founder of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society of the United Brethren Church, and also its first corresponding secretary. After four years of most devoted service he was compelled, on account of failing health, to relinquish the work he so greatly loved. He lived until 1866, never regaining his former strength, when he was called to his eternal reward.

In 1857 the General Conference elected as his successor Rev. Daniel K. Flickinger, who had returned a few months before from his second missionary trip to Africa. This election changed the course of Mr. Flickinger's life, while it did not remove him from connection with the missionary work. The reader has already seen a more extended account of him.

The General Conference of 1885 elected the Rev. Z. Warner, of the Parkersburg Conference, to the office of missionary secretary. Dr. Warner had been an active and successful itinerant all his life. He was an able preacher, an accomplished lecturer, and a facile writer, but found it difficult to adapt himself to the details and drudgery of office life. In September, 1887, he resigned

his office, and a few weeks later accepted the pastoral care of a church in Gibbon, Nebraska, performing also duty as a teacher in the United Brethren academy located there. His labor here was destined to be brief. In January following he was stricken down with pneumonia, and in a few days after his generous spirit passed into the presence of his Master. His departure brought profound sorrow to the hearts of thousands who had admired and loved him.

On the resignation of Dr. Warner, Rev. William McKee, the treasurer of the society since 1885 and for the term from 1869 to 1873, was chosen by the executive committee of the Missionary Board as acting corresponding secretary until the next assembling of the General Conference. One year later, in September, 1888, Rev. B. F. Booth, of the East Ohio Conference, was elected by the executive committee to be assistant corresponding secretary. In May, 1889, the General Conference elected Dr. Booth to the office of corresponding secretary. He performed the duties of the office with devout zeal and distinguished ability until March 9, 1893, when the Lord whom he served called him to his eternal reward. Dr. Booth was born in Holmes County, Ohio, on July 4, 1839. He was converted in 1858, became a member of the Muskingum (East Ohio) Conference in 1864, and was ordained by Bishop Edwards in 1866. He served efficiently as pastor and presiding elder until 1888, when he was called to the service of the Missionary Board. He was connected with various church boards, and enjoyed in high degree the confidence and regard of his brethren.

The General Conference of 1893 elected as corresponding secretary the present able and energetic incumbent, Rev. William M. Bell. Dr. Bell was born in Whitley County, Indiana, on November 12, 1860. He was licensed as a



minister and became a member of the St. Joseph Conference in 1879, and was ordained in 1882. He became an active and successful pastor, gave attention to the Sunday-school work, especially to the normal training of teachers, and was for four years president of the Indiana State Sunday-School Association. Dr. Bell's work is characterized by well-directed zeal and rapidity of execution, and he is an earnest and inspiring preacher. The General Conference selected wisely when he was chosen to this important office.

Rev. William McKee, the treasurer of the society, was first elected to this office in 1869, remaining in its service until 1873. He was again elected in 1885, and has continued to the present. Dr. McKee was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, on February 20, 1831. He was converted in 1852, became a member of the Auglaize Conference in 1856, and was ordained to the ministry in 1858. Since 1868 he has been a member of the Miami Conference. He served successfully as pastor until called into the general service. In the office of missionary treasurer his work is characterized by carefulness and accuracy, and his long service as treasurer, amounting now to sixteen years, has proved in an eminent degree satisfactory to the Church. As a preacher he is clear, concise, and able, and always heard with profit.

The treasurers of the Missionary Society have been Revs. John Kemp, William McKee, J. W. Hott, and J. K. Billheimer.

The headquarters of this society, as of all the general departments of the Church, are at Dayton, Ohio.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHURCH-ERECTION SOCIETY

#### I. ORGANIZATION.

FROM the organization of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society by the General Conference of 1853 four quadrenniums were to elapse before another most important movement was projected—that of the creation of the Church-Erection Society. By the agencies of the Missionary Society very considerable sums of money were gathered, and missionaries were sent to the frontier and home fields to gather whom they could into the fold of the Church. Hundreds and even thousands who thus heard the word and were converted were gathered into local organizations, only to be lost again to the Church because they were unable without aid from elsewhere to build for themselves houses of worship. In many instances, especially in the mission conferences of the frontiers, these homeless societies after some years entirely disappeared. Too weak in numbers and resources to build for themselves houses of worship and attract others to their fold, the disintegrating process set in. Their membership diminished, either by removals or by members seeking relationship in other more favored denominations, and thus the work which had begun with apparently so bright promise was in time largely dissipated. Many of the ministers and people lamented this condition of things, but were powerless to provide a remedy in the absence of any organized method of furnishing the needed aid. Appeals by private

letters or through the columns of the *Religious Telescope* usually resulted in but little fruit, and personal visits by ministers to the older conferences for the purpose of soliciting were expensive and unsatisfactory.

In the General Conference of May, 1869, at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, a proposition was made looking to the organization of a society whose work should lie alongside that of the Missionary Society, its office being to assist in the building of houses of worship for those who, through the labors of the missionaries, were brought into the Church. The proposition received the favorable attention of the conference, and was referred to a committee consisting of Revs. L. S. Chittenden, M. Bulger, J. M. Bishop, I. K. Statton, and M. Ambrose. The committee formulated a plan for the organization of a society, and submitted a report to the conference. The report, upon further discussion, was adopted. The organization was to be called the Church-Erection Society of the United Brethren in Christ. It was not deemed advisable at this time to elect a separate board of management, and the interests of the new organization were committed to the Missionary Board and its corresponding secretary and treasurer to be cared for and brought into active life.

## II. PROGRESS AND WORK.

With no separate agency to push this new work, and the officers and board of the Missionary Society having quite enough to do and never quite enough money for the work for which they were chiefly responsible, the collection of funds for the Church-Erection Society did not reach any considerable proportions. Nevertheless, in the first quadrennium the sum of \$1,215.30 was placed to its credit, and four loans aggregating \$1,000 were made to as many new church-building enterprises. And

so the society had a beginning, and something more than a name to live. At the General Conference succeeding, that of May, 1873, held at Dayton, Ohio, a constitution was adopted for its government, and the collections during the four years following amounted to \$8,401.23, and twenty new church-houses were erected with aid from its treasury.

In the General Conference of 1881 the question of securing greater efficiency to the work of the society was again considered, and action was taken which provided for assessments to be made by the annual conferences upon all their various charges. The object of this was not only to secure larger collections for the treasury, but also to inspire a more general interest throughout the denomination. The General Conference of 1885, held at Fostoria, Ohio, took another forward step, in creating a separate board of management who should have charge of this special interest. The board was to consist of five persons, who were to serve for terms of four years, and the presiding bishops of the Church and the corresponding secretary and treasurer of the society were to be *ex officio* members. But no special secretary and treasurer were as yet elected, the duties of these offices being still committed to the general officers of the Missionary Society.

With the growing cares of the secretary and treasurer of the Missionary Society, it was becoming apparent that, if the work of the Church-Erection Society should have proper attention, at least one general officer who should devote all his time to its interests must be provided. Accordingly, the General Conference of 1889, at York, Pennsylvania, elected Rev. J. Hill, of the Erie Conference, to the office of corresponding secretary. Mr. Hill entered upon his duties with an earnest purpose to succeed. But the Church, under the former method of procedure, had in large degree come to look upon the



church-erection movement as not possessing very great importance. It was now twenty years since the society had been organized, and no efficient means had as yet been provided to bring its work and its needs to the attention of the people. The Missionary Society was in the field, its work was ably represented by men who were especially set to do that work, the people had been educated to respond nobly to its calls, and generous sums came annually into its treasury. It was fairly before the people, and its work prospered accordingly. For the Church-Erection Society little was asked, and little was obtained. But the form of education which the people had received in regard to its work was the most harmful feature of the situation. Mr. Hill, in consequence, obtained so inconsiderable encouragement in the way of contributions to the treasury of the society that he believed he was not justified in accepting the salary which the General Conference had provided, and at the end of a year pressed his resignation of his office. The board, believing it inexpedient to fill the vacancy, recommitted the work to the officers of the Missionary Society.

The General Conference of 1893, held in Dayton, Ohio, again elected a general secretary, the choice this time falling upon Rev. C. I. B. Brane, of the Maryland Conference. Mr. Brane brought his fine abilities to the work of soliciting, but did not meet with the success he had hoped to gain, the same inertia as regarded giving largely for this interest being almost everywhere encountered. He accordingly, at the end of a year's service, followed the example of Mr. Hill, not wishing to accept a salary for work which he felt was not yielding sufficient results. The board of management, however, felt that they ought to continue the experiment, and, if possible, bring this important interest thoroughly to the attention of the peo-

ple, in the hope also that larger contributions might yet be secured. They accordingly, at their annual session of May, 1895, elected to the vacancy Rev. William M. Weekley, of the Rock River Conference. Mr. Weekley entered upon his work in October following. He is an able and earnest advocate of his cause, and, notwithstanding the difficulties he has had to meet, has attained encouraging success.

At first sight this history of the work of the society might suggest the thought of failure. But nothing could be more untrue than this. With all the discouragements under which the society has proceeded, it has gathered into its treasury a sum now amounting to forty-two thousand dollars. Most of this money has been loaned again and again, until the aggregate of loans made has reached the considerable sum of ninety thousand dollars. In all up to the present two hundred and sixty-five churches have been aided. And all this has been accomplished with almost no expense to the Church.

The Church-Erection Society, by the terms of its constitution, does not give money as direct donations for church-building purposes, but makes loans, without interest, in sums of from one hundred to five hundred dollars, for periods varying from one to five years. In very special instances, as in important and more expensive missions in cities, the sums may be increased to one thousand dollars, and the time may be extended to longer periods, at the option of the board of management.

The work of this society is one of the greatest importance to the future growth of the Church, and it is to be earnestly hoped that the popular conception of this fact will be in time so far advanced that contributions to its treasury may fairly correspond to those which are gathered for the uses of the Missionary Society.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION<sup>1</sup>

#### I. ORGANIZATION.

It may be assumed that the body of learned gentlemen who gave us the recent revision of the Holy Scriptures were chosen with reference to a safe conservatism, as well as for their eminent philological skill. We may note therefore an interesting significance in the fact that the familiar passage in Psalms, "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those that published it," was rendered by these scholars, "The Lord giveth the word: the women that publish the tidings are a great host."<sup>2</sup> No one will suspect that these learned divines leaned unduly toward bringing women into the foreground as the evangels of a new evolution in the work of spreading the gospel. We are rather to see in this ancient scripture a prophecy whose true meaning lay through the ages undiscovered, but which now is realizing a magnificent fulfillment. Even the plain wording of the passage was not understood by the older scholars, much less its spirit apprehended. In this new translation we have a beautiful expression of the literal sense, as well as of the fact which it so strikingly sets forth. The present time is in a most emphatic degree the era of woman's work, and in no department of thought or work has there been a greater earnestness or activity than in the religious field. In the

<sup>1</sup> The materials for this sketch are derived chiefly from a pamphlet, "History of the Woman's Missionary Association of the United Brethren in Christ," prepared by the publishing committee of the association.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 68: 11.

Sunday school, in the work of missions, in those reforms into which religion and morality enter as a chief element, the women of the present are at the front as a great host of interested and successful workers. The divine writer with the eye of prophecy looks down through the ages. He sees the Lord Jehovah giving out messages, and the hosts of the women, a great and obedient army, quickly taking up the words and publishing them abroad.

Twenty-one and a half years ago the Woman's Missionary Association of the United Brethren in Christ was organized. But such movements never take form until somebody has been troubled in spirit, until some one has wrestled in prayer and has received a special divine baptism. When God is pleased to speak, somebody's heart must first be prepared to receive the word. In this instance the burden was laid upon the heart of an unassuming young woman, Miss Elizabeth Hoffman, residing a few miles from the city of Dayton. She communicated her thought to Rev. John Kemp, who was for so many years treasurer of the parent Missionary Board. Mr. Kemp sympathized with her wishes, and began talking about the subject to some of the people of the Summit Street and First United Brethren churches of the city. A meeting was soon after called for the purpose of organizing a woman's missionary society for the Miami Conference. This meeting was held in the Summit Street Church, on May 9, 1872, anticipating by three and a half years the forming of the larger or general association. A day and an evening were spent in consultation, and as a result an organization was effected and a constitution adopted.

The next step, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, was to organize auxiliary societies on the various charges of the conference. A number of local



organizations were formed, and collections of funds began to be made. Three years afterward a call was issued to the women of the Church generally for the assembling of a woman's missionary convention. As it was proposed that the assembly should be of the nature of a mass convention, and not a convention of delegates, any who were so disposed could attend it without first receiving authority as delegates. The conference was held on October 21 and 22, 1875, in the First United Brethren Church, at Dayton. Nine conferences were represented, namely, Miami, Scioto, Sandusky, Michigan, Indiana, Western Reserve, Lower Wabash, Virginia, and Allegheny. In several other conferences delegates were appointed, from whom letters of encouragement were received. A proposed constitution, which had been previously published, was considered and, with some amendments, adopted. The name of the organization as agreed upon and placed in the constitution is the Woman's Missionary Association of the United Brethren in Christ. The following officers and board of management were then elected: President, Mrs. T. N. Sowers; vice-presidents, Mrs. Z. A. Colestock, Mrs. M. H. Bridgeman, Mrs. S. Haywood; corresponding secretary, Mrs. L. R. Keister; recording secretary, Mrs. D. L. Rike; treasurer, Mrs. W. J. Shuey. The Miami Conference society then reorganized, and paid the moneys which had been collected into the treasury of the new and larger association. It was agreed that the annual meetings should be held in the spring of the year, and the month of May, 1876, was designated as the time for the first anniversary, the meeting to be held in Dayton.

The general plan of organization includes a board of managers, a board of trustees, annual-conference branch societies, local societies, young ladies' bands, and children's bands. The board of managers consists of the

trustees, as provided by the constitution, three delegates elected annually by each conference branch, life patrons, and life directors. The board of trustees is elected by the board of managers, and the officers are chosen from the trustees. By the provisions of the constitution the association, while it elects its own board of managers and executive officers, is under the direction of the General Conference, and submits quadrennial reports to that body. Thus organized and equipped, the association was now ready for larger work. No particular field or plan of work was, however, determined upon at this initial meeting, the choice of a mission field being left to be settled upon further consideration, and when a nucleus of funds should be secured to support an actual work.

## II. THE MISSION IN AFRICA.

The first anniversary, held as had been agreed, proved to be a meeting of great importance as determining, in great degree, the future policy and operations of the association. Mrs. J. K. Billheimer, who had then returned from West Africa, was present at this meeting, and made a strong plea for the women and children of that benighted land. Upon full consideration it was agreed to use the funds which had been gathered to support a school in Africa. It was also proposed that the school be under the control of the missionaries of the general board, at or near Shaingay. The officers of the general board counseled against this, and suggested that the Woman's Association organize a separate and independent mission. This suggestion prevailed, and it was decided to open work in the thickly populated region up the Bompeh River, about sixty miles distant from Shaingay, and about fifty miles east of Freetown. Mr. Gomer, then the efficient superintendent of the missions under the care of

the general board, rendered valuable assistance, by repeated visits, in locating the proposed mission at Rotufunk, in the territory which had been determined upon. The choice of location proved a most excellent one, as has been abundantly demonstrated by long experience. Miss Emily Beeken, who was first under appointment by the general board, was transferred to the service of the woman's board, and arrived at Rotufunk in the fall of 1877, and thus the actual work of the Woman's Association in the foreign field was now to begin.

Miss Beeken began her work under peculiar difficulties. The station chosen for her was remote from any other mission or place inhabited by white people. All the people about her were black, and all were heathen. The pall of the deepest intellectual and spiritual darkness had rested for ages upon the ancestry of these people, and work among them must begin at the beginning. But while they were utterly heathen, they were not savages. Miss Beeken was received with the utmost kindness. The headman, or chief, of the place gave her welcome and protection, and erected for her a *barra*, or place for public worship. On an elevated place near the town was erected, at the expense of the association, a mud house for a home for Miss Beeken. Thus provided, she established within a short time two schools, and in addition to her public religious teaching in the *barra* she visited surrounding towns to hold religious services. She began and carried forward a large work, too much for the strength of one person in that malarious and debilitating climate, and it is not surprising that after a little more than a year and a half of toil her strength gave way, and she was obliged to relinquish her work. During her stay a fine large bell, the gift of Mr. John Dodds, of Dayton, Ohio, was sent to the station, and its rich tones, the first ever heard by

the people, called them to the *barra* to hear the gospel of Jesus.

Miss Beeken was succeeded by Mrs. M. M. Mair, of Glasgow, Scotland, a lady who had an experience of twenty-six years of mission work on the west coast of Africa. Thoroughly acclimated and acquainted with the requirements of the work, she was able at once to render efficient service. She reached Rotufunk in November, 1879. The board of managers had arranged at the meeting in May of the previous spring to build a home for the missionaries, and the sum of two thousand dollars had been easily secured for this purpose. The materials were sent from America, and Mrs. Mair superintended the work of construction. She possessed splendid qualities for missionary service, and gained almost unlimited influence with the people. The head-men or chiefs of the tribes respected every wish she expressed. She established two additional schools, and secured better native helpers for the work of instruction. The chief of Rotufunk, Pa Sourie, compelled his people to keep the Sabbath, and himself gave up the use of strong drink and tobacco as a wholesome example for them. In all the surrounding towns the Sabbath came to be thoroughly regarded within the three years and a half of her residence in the mission. A great achievement was made in breaking up the slave-trade in that section, Rotufunk itself having been a traders' station. She also received deeds duly executed for one hundred and fifty acres of land at Rotufunk and Palli each, a portion of which was under cultivation.

It was cause for sincere sorrow when this good woman's strength began to wane, by reason of incessant labors, as well as by advancing years, and a final rest from so exacting toil became necessary. But the Lord was preparing



other laborers for the field. At Union Biblical Seminary, in Dayton, Ohio, there were two young students whose hearts God touched—Rev. R. N. West and Miss Lida Miller. Both were inspired with a common purpose, that of bearing the gospel to the heathen, and, uniting their hands and hearts in marriage, they left their homes and country, under appointment of the woman's board, and arrived at Freetown in December of 1882. Mrs. Mair remained with them for a few months to introduce them to their work, and then set sail for America. Her presence at the meeting of the board in the following May, at Westerville, Ohio, previous to returning to her home in Scotland, was the inspiration of enlarged confidence and hope.

To this meeting came a letter from Mr. West saying that the attendance at the services at the *barra* in Rotu-funk had become so large that many in rainy weather were obliged to stand without in the beating rains, and asking that arrangements be made for the erection of a chapel. The board concurred, the money was soon secured, and the chapel built at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars. Eleven hundred of the amount was pledged before the board adjourned. The building was sufficiently large to accommodate three hundred persons, and was provided with a primary room for the smaller children in the Sunday school. Mr. Gomer, superintendent of the Shaingay Mission, whose name will long be held in loving veneration, dedicated this chapel with appropriate services on February 24, 1884. After the sermon the people were invited to make a free-will offering, and among the contributions were one hundred and sixty acres of land at Palli, five binkeys of rice (between fifty and one hundred bushels), one cow, one country-cloth, and thirty-seven dollars and fourteen cents in money. There was much

rejoicing among the people and the missionaries over the completion of this house.

The work meanwhile had been greatly enlarging. Fifty-four regular preaching places had now been established, a large increase within the year. More than twenty-five hundred people now stately heard the divine message, fully one thousand every Sabbath at different stations connected with the mission.

But now a trial of the utmost severity, coming as a twofold calamity, was to test the faith and endurance of the missionaries. Two weeks after the dedication of the chapel one of those devastating wars which are of so frequent occurrence in Africa broke out and swept with fury over the region where Rotufunk is situated. At the same time came also the added scourge of smallpox, brought there by a Mohammedan priest. Very quickly the people were scattered. The chapel services were almost deserted. In nearly all the towns preaching was suspended. About fifty died of smallpox. Mr. West was prostrated by the dread disease, but the Lord preserved his life. But in all this great trial the gospel seemed to acquire a stronger hold upon the people than it had before.

At the suggestion of the board of trustees, who feared the effects of the long-continued strain upon the strength of Mr. and Mrs. West, they returned to America early in 1886, leaving the work under the care of their native helpers, with the promise of occasional visits of Mr. Gomer, of the Shaingay Mission. In September of the same year they returned to the charge which they had come to love with the strongest affection. The report for the year 1896, a little over ten years from the founding of the mission, shows the work to have been in a most promising condition.

In 1887 decided progress was made in strengthening the

mission. Two additional laborers, Rev. and Mrs. W. S. Sage, were sent out, both graduates of Union Biblical Seminary, and both having previous experience in the mission at Shaingay, thus adding much to the efficiency of the work. A second step was the establishing of a girls' home. The object of this was to provide a legal asylum from which parents could not sell their little girls as wives to anybody who would buy. The holding of women and girls as chattels was according to the law of the country, and nothing could be done to protect the children when the fathers wanted to sell them. A home, however, provided a legal shelter, and such a home was built. It was named "The Mary Sowers Home for Girls," in honor of Mrs. Sowers, the first president of the association. Two thousand dollars were expended in its erection. In 1889 a house costing a similar sum was erected as a home for boys. It is a good frame structure, with modern conveniences.

In November, 1889, two more missionaries joined the company on the field. They were Miss Frances Williams and Miss Ellen Groenendyke, both finely fitted for the requirements of the work. In 1890 the school at Bompeh was placed in charge of Mrs. Thompson, a daughter of Bishop Crowther, of the Niger Mission. Mrs. Thompson made an important advance in insisting that the parents must clothe their children, instead of looking to the mission for this. A good deal of murmuring arose, but she was resolute, and the good end she sought, better alike for the parents and the mission, was accomplished.

On account of impaired health, Mr. and Mrs. Sage, late in 1890, returned to America. Their places were soon filled by Rev. and Mrs. Jacob Miller, students in Union Biblical Seminary, who reached Rotufunk on December 31, 1890. The need of a medical missionary had long

been felt, and for this service the board appointed Miss Marietta Hatfield, M.D., of Potsdam, Ohio, in 1891. Accompanying Dr. Hatfield were Miss Elma Bittle, of Lewisburg, Ohio, and Miss Ella Schenck, of Lockington, Ohio. Both were accomplished teachers, as well as most devout Christians. Miss Bittle entered upon her work with a heart of devoted love, but her career was soon to close. She was overtaken with fatal illness in 1892, and her sweet spirit passed out in great triumph into the presence of the Master to whom she gave her life. Less than three weeks before, Miss Frances Williams had succumbed to the dreaded African fever, also giving her life in truest martyrdom for the cause she loved. And thus, so near together, these two were taken away by death, the first since the beginning of the United Brethren work in Africa thirty-seven years before, so singularly had the lives of our missionaries hitherto been preserved. To these names of the departed has since been added that of the Rev. R. N. West, also of the Bompeh Mission, who died September 22, 1894, and whose remains rest in the field to which he gave himself as a willing offering. In this year Bishop Kephart made an episcopal visit to the missions in Africa, and presided at the annual session of the African conference, held that year at Rotufunk.

The missionaries in the Bompeh field at the present writing are Rev. L. A. McGrew, Mrs. Clara McGrew, Miss Mary Archer, M.D., Miss Florence Cronise, and Miss Minnie Eaton. Others in the service of the board are in America for rest.

The home of rest for missionaries on Mount Leicester, near Freetown, in the construction of which the woman's board is coöperating with the general board, has been spoken of in the account of the missions of the latter board.



## III. A MISSION IN GERMANY.

At the annual meeting of the woman's board of May, 1880, held at Fostoria, Ohio, the formation of a second mission was decided upon. The Rev. C. Bischoff, superintendent of the mission of the general board in Germany, was present, and spoke with pressing earnestness of the need of true evangelical work in Germany. Others acquainted with the religious condition of the Fatherland supported Mr. Bischoff's address. The mission in Africa being now fairly launched, and the Church responding generously to the calls of the women for funds for their work, the board, after full deliberation, decided to begin work in the city of Coburg, Germany, a place of fourteen thousand inhabitants, and the sum of three hundred and fifty dollars was appropriated for making a beginning. Rev. G. Noetzold was appointed to the charge. He commenced work in due time, and in March, 1881, organized a church. Encouraging success, and many persecutions, attended his work. The hall at first obtained soon proved too small, and a larger place was hired. The late Rev. William Mittendorf, so long editor of our German periodicals, visited the place not long after, and was greatly cheered by what had been accomplished. But hardly anywhere is true evangelical work more difficult or more persistently opposed than among a godless people professing Christianity, all of them duly connected with the church, but knowing nothing of religion beyond its outer forms. So Otterbein found it in America in some of the places where he preached, and so the missionaries of our Church in Germany have found it.

In the spring of 1886 Rev. H. Barkemeyer was appointed by the conference in Germany to the Coburg Mission, the woman's board still furnishing money for its support. Two years later the board decided to raise

a fund of three thousand dollars for building a chapel for the Coburg congregation, and two thousand three hundred dollars were secured within the next year toward this object. Various obstacles having arisen to prevent satisfactory progress, the board, at its meeting of 1889, decided to give back the Coburg Mission to the general board. It was also proposed to open a mission in Berlin, but a suitable person for undertaking the work not being found, it was decided to hold the funds collected to be used for the erection of a chapel in Germany at such time and place as Providence might direct. At the meeting of 1892, the way being still not open for commencing work in Berlin, on account of inability to secure the services of a suitable missionary, the board decided to offer the funds on hand to the parent board for the erection of a chapel at Weimar. The offer was accepted, and the amount of \$2,703.08 was paid over to the treasurer of the general board. This church was recently completed and dedicated. It is a substantial and attractive structure, and will serve well the uses of the congregation which regularly gathers in it. The more spiritual worship of these people will prove a blessing to their less spiritual neighbors in this old city. The woman's board does not now operate any mission in Germany.

#### IV. THE CHINESE MISSIONS.

##### 1. *The Mission in Portland, Oregon.*

The spiritual destitution of the Chinese on the Pacific Coast early enlisted the interest of the woman's board. This interest was especially quickened by the letters of Bishop Castle when residing in Oregon. At the annual meeting of 1881, held at Western, Iowa, the first steps were taken looking toward the commencement of work among these people from the Celestial Empire, and the

bishop was requested to furnish such information as he could respecting a favorable location for opening a work.

Bishop Castle, after looking over the ground in San Francisco and Portland, Oregon, reported favorably for the latter city. Here a Christian Chinaman, Moy Ling, had for six years conducted an evening school for his fellow-countrymen, at his own expense, with such voluntary assistance of teachers as he was able to secure. The work was becoming too large for him, and he was anxious to have some church take it and carry it forward. Here was a providential opening, a school already organized and under good management, and on the recommendation of Bishop Castle the board entered into arrangements to take the school. In November, 1882, Mrs. Ellen Sickafoose, of Buchanan, Michigan, was appointed to take charge of the mission, Moy Ling continuing at its head until her arrival in July, 1883.

Mrs. Sickafoose entered upon her work with twenty pupils. This number increased so rapidly that at the end of the third quarter there were one hundred and fifty-seven enrolled. The pupils were greatly interested, and contributed during this time over four hundred dollars toward the expenses of the school. But the most precious fruit of the school was that a large proportion cast away their idolatrous joss worship, and espoused the Christian faith.

The work growing thus rapidly, the board, for the second year, appointed Rev. George Sickafoose, who had been under engagement with the parent board in a mission in East Portland, to assist his wife in the Chinese mission. Arrangements were also made soon after for the purchase of a building for the school, and for religious services. A well-located house was bought for eight thousand dollars, and the mission had now a home, with a residence for the missionaries on the same lot.

Many of those who have attended this school have returned to their old homes in China, and those who became Christians, it may be believed, have done something in bearing the seed of gospel truth to their own people in their native land. The Chinese are firm in their religious convictions, and few could be induced to abandon the Christian religion even under stress of bitter persecution. Moy Ling, who possesses such sterling personal qualities, as shown by his work in establishing and conducting the school for about seven years, still remains connected with the mission. The school sessions are held regularly every week-day evening, except Saturday. In July, 1891, Mr. Sickafoose resigned his connection with the school to reënter the active ministry. Mrs. Sickafoose continued in the mission for something over two years longer, when failing health necessitated her resignation, after giving it faithful and successful service for a period of ten years. In 1893 Mrs. Mary E. Henkle, of Philomath, Oregon, was appointed to fill the vacancy, with Moy Ling continuing as interpreter and assistant.

## 2. *The Mission in China.*

In 1888 the board decided, upon the earnest recommendation of Mrs. Sickafoose, and after mature consideration, to open a mission work in China, and in 1889 Mr. Sickafoose and Moy Ling, who had received regular authority as a minister, were deputed to visit China and locate a mission. Miss Australia Patterson, a graduate of Western College, and Miss Lillie R. Shaffner, a student in Lebanon Valley College, both possessing fine accomplishments, were appointed for work in the mission when it should be located. The company reached Hong Kong on October 31, 1889, and after careful investigation decided to locate the mission in Canton, the metropolis of southern



China. This part of the work being accomplished, Mr. Sickafoose returned to Portland, Moy Ling remaining with the other missionaries for over a year. Miss Shaffner at the end of a year returned to America on account of failing health. A few months later Moy Ling returned, and Miss Patterson was now alone. With a heart full of true courage, and trusting in the Master whom she sought to honor, she addressed herself earnestly to her work. Her first important business was to learn the Chinese language, always a difficult undertaking. Meanwhile, she superintended a Sunday school for the children of English and American residents in the city. After acquiring sufficient knowledge of the language she began the work of house-to-house visitation, with the assistance of a Bible-woman as interpreter. In the fall of 1891 Miss S. Lovina Halverson, M.D., a former student in Western College, Iowa, was appointed as medical missionary, and arrived in Canton soon after. In 1892 Miss Regina Bigler, M.D., was appointed for the same work. She reached Canton in December of that year. A medical dispensary was established for the purpose of prescribing for the sick. These dispensaries afford very special opportunities for religious work, since with the medical prescriptions the word of life is also dispensed to the women who come for treatment. It is a return to the method of the Great Teacher, who gave healing alike to the bodies and the souls of men. Large numbers of women visit the dispensaries, and many of them gladly hear the word of life.

In the spring of 1893 the Rev. and Mrs. E. E. Fix, graduates of Western College and Union Biblical Seminary, were appointed by the board to the mission in Canton. They reached that city in November of that year. They were making encouraging progress, when,

unfortunately, on account of the failing health of Mrs. Fix, in 1895, it was thought best that they should return to America.

In June, 1894, Drs. Halverson and Bigler had the rough experience of being mobbed in the streets of Canton, Miss Halverson very nearly losing her life. She had given assistance to a sick Chinaman, and started with him to send him to a hospital. Proceeding a short distance, a frenzied mob attacked her, with threats to kill her. She was pursued, struck down, dragged through the streets, and stoned, when a custom-house officer, seeing the tumult, came to her rescue. Miss Bigler, learning what had occurred, started to bring her home, when she was assailed by the same mob, but, fortunately, was not struck by the stones that were thrown. A body of soldiers rescued her, and the two ladies were afterward sent home under an escort. Miss Halverson's experience was much like that of Paul at Lystra, and, happily, did not result as her assailants intended. The attack was a part of the general outbreak against foreigners about that time. The intense hatred was due to the prevalence of the plague, for which many of the superstitious Chinese thought the foreigners were in some way responsible. This malady, then so fatal in many of the Chinese cities, was the bubonic plague, which prevails now with so great fatality in India.

#### V. THE WOMAN'S EVANGEL.

The publication of this journal, in sixteen-page form, monthly, was begun in January, 1882, with Mrs. L. R. Keister, corresponding secretary, as editor. The paper was well edited from the start, and was destined to be popular. In 1893, on Mrs. Keister's resignation, the editorial work was transferred to the cultured pen of Mrs. L. K. Miller.

It has proved very helpful in the work, has attained a circulation of five thousand copies, and from the beginning has paid all expenses of publication.

#### VI. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.

The Woman's Association has been fortunate in the selection of its executive officers. The first president was Mrs. Mary Ann Sowers, a lady widely known for her efficiency and Christian zeal. She was chosen in 1875. She resigned in 1879, on account of failing health, and died November 17, 1880. In May, 1879, Mrs. Sylvia Haywood, of Westerville, Ohio, a lady of most estimable personal qualities, was elected president. At the meeting in May, 1887, succeeding Mrs. Haywood's death, Mrs. L. K. Miller was chosen to this office. She has given to its service ten years of diligent attention. Mrs. Keister, who was corresponding secretary from the beginning, resigned in 1893, and was succeeded by Mrs. B. F. Witt, of Indianapolis. The office force at the present writing consists of Mrs. Witt as general secretary, and Mrs. Miller as president and editor of the *Evangel*.

#### VII. SUMMARY.

From a summarized statement in the corresponding secretary's report for 1896 it is seen that the Chinese mission in Portland is progressing hopefully. In addition to this there is an American mission in that city under the care of the board. This church, and the Sunday school and young people's society connected with it, are in a prosperous condition. The church property, valued at nine thousand dollars, added to that of the school originally purchased, makes a total of property in Portland valued at seventeen thousand dollars. Rev. and Mrs. E. E. Fix have recently taken charge of this mission church.

In Canton there are three American missionaries, two of the number medical; one native pastor, one chapel-keeper, several Bible-women, one organized church, and six day schools. The medical dispensary, open one or two days in the week, has within a year supplied treatment to over thirteen thousand patients. Many of these are in the city away from the dispensary, and at smaller places adjacent to Canton. The prescriptions up to the present time are, with few exceptions, made without charge.

In the Bompeh Mission, Africa, there were, in May, 1896, American missionaries, seven; in America for rest, four, making eleven under appointment of the board. There were 122 preaching places; organized churches, three, with 120 communicants. In addition to these were 65 inquirers' or seekers' classes, with an enrollment of 1,286. Four Sunday schools were reported, with 289 pupils; eight day schools, with 254 pupils. There were four ordained and eight unordained itinerants; three chapels and six mission-houses. The mission-houses were valued at \$8,200, the school-houses at \$4,000, the chapels at \$2,400, industrial building at \$800, boat-house and other buildings at \$1,000, making a total of \$16,400.

The total amount of moneys collected and expended by the Woman's Missionary Association from its organization, in 1875, to May, 1896, was \$215,766.44.



## CHAPTER V

### COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES

#### I. INTRODUCTORY.

WE have seen that the founder of the United Brethren Church, Bishop Otterbein, was a man of thorough scholastic and theological training. We have also seen that the greater number of his early associates in evangelistic work were men of but modest educational attainments, chiefly such as could be reached through the common schools of their time, or were gained in private study after entering upon their ministerial career. But what they lacked in the learning of the schools they made up largely by the greater zeal and industry in the active work of their calling. Some portion of their limited libraries was usually carried in the saddle-bags, and it was not an unusual thing to see them riding on horseback with book in hand as they went from one appointment to another on their extended circuits. Some of them indeed obtained in this manner many of the advantages of a liberal education. Habits of close and sustained thinking, the best result of mental training, if not the details of a broader learning, were thus formed, and the men who seemed to the more cultured to be without education often exhibited great power in dealing with pulpit subjects. They expressed their thoughts with clearness and force, frequently with genuine eloquence, and usually carried conviction to the minds of their hearers.

Notwithstanding the fact that many of these early

preachers thus sought for themselves a better equipment for their work, and also that their great leader was a man of broad and thorough scholarship, there came to be fostered among them to a considerable extent a feeling of actual prejudice against a collegiate training for ministers. This feeling seems to have arisen from the fact that they saw many of the educated ministers with whom they came in nearest contact to be men seemingly depending more upon their educational attainments in their work of preaching than upon a living, spiritual connection with the divine. The sermons of these men were looked upon as learned, but unspiritual, as indeed were frequently the lives of the ministers themselves, and these lay preachers—for such were many of them at the first—felt that it was better to rely directly upon the help of the Holy Spirit in the pulpit than upon the aid derived from books. Their work, like that of their similarly called and endowed fellow-workers in another denomination,—the followers of Wesley and Asbury,—had upon it the manifest seal of the Holy Spirit, in whose inspiration and power they trusted, and they felt that a college education would in some way interfere with this fuller trust in the divine Spirit for success. The prejudice thus fostered was carried down to a comparatively late date, and when some of the ministers of a little more than half a century ago began to talk of establishing a college for the Church they met with the most earnest opposition. The proposition, if it were carried into effect, it was believed would prove a most serious blow to the spirituality and future success of the Church.

Among those who thus opposed were some of the ablest and most influential ministers of the Church. There are many persons living who remember Bishop John Russel as a man of extraordinary gifts, whose abilities as a preacher

and counselor led his brethren to exalt him to the office of bishop. Yet this great and good man deplored earnestly the movement which resulted in building Otterbein University. But it is well known how the good bishop lived to change his mind on this subject, that he afterward gave strong encouragement to the building of a college for the Church, and that before he died he made provision for a liberal portion of his estate to be used in the interest of the theological training of ministers. It is also well remembered that Bishop Edwards, a man of similarly strong intellectual endowments, and one of the ablest and most devout preachers the Church has ever had, for a long time regarded with apprehension the movement toward establishing educational institutions. His doubts, however, in time gave way, and he became a true friend of the colleges, as also later of Union Biblical Seminary, an institution founded to promote especially what these fathers of the Church most feared—the theological training of its ministers.

This apprehension, however, cherished by these and others of the Church fathers, had a more specific reference to the college training of ministers, and not to the education of the people in general. The feeling was that of opposition to naming this or that son in a family for the ministry, without reference to a distinct divine call, and then sending him to college and bringing him out as a full-fledged preacher. Thus the colleges came sometimes to be spoken of as “preacher factories.” The people of the Church believed in and supported the common schools, just as did those of other denominations, and some of their sons and daughters were sent to college, but they feared the effect upon the spiritual life of the Church of a ministry educated and relying for success upon the skill thus attained, instead of trusting to the help of the Holy Spirit.

The feeling of the people of the earlier periods of the Church is truly expressed by Rev. H. G. Spayth, the first historian of the Church, who was altogether friendly to higher education, and yet shared with others the fear that the earnest, simple-hearted, but spiritually-minded ministry of those days might be displaced by an educated but unspiritual ministry. Writing in the *Religious Telescope*,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Spayth said: "Now mark me, literary, scientific, and religious attainments we, as a church and people, have always respected, admired, and honored. . . . Had our fathers and brethren believed it to be their duty to build up seminaries of learning, it could have been done, as well as other things; but they confessed that their call was emphatically to the weightier matter, that of winning souls. As to the ministry, they sought not so much to fill the sacred stand with men of polished eloquence as with men of power, of love, and of sound minds—men called of God, as was Aaron. They had also learned these two lessons: first, that learning is not the primary, but the secondary means, or help, in the gospel ministry; second, that the tree of knowledge is not the tree of life."

The first definite action looking toward the founding of an institution of learning for the Church was taken by the General Conference of 1845, convened in Circleville, Ohio. The estimated membership of the entire denomination at this time reached about thirty thousand. The Church was represented in this conference by three bishops and twenty-four delegates from annual conferences. The bishops were Henry Kumler, Sen., John Coons, and Henry Kumler, Jun. Among the delegates were J. J. Glossbrenner, Jacob Markwood, John Russel, J. Bachtel, J. Ritter, Alexander Biddle, Joshua Montgomery, E. Vandemark, H. G. Spayth, George Bonebrake,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. VI., pp. 336, 337.



Daniel Bonebrake, and others equally well known in the counsels of the Church. Of the delegates the first three named were afterward chosen to the office of bishop, and one alone, Alexander Biddle, survives to the present. The subject of education was taken under consideration by this conference, and the following tersely expressed resolutions were, after mature deliberation, adopted by a nearly unanimous vote :

*Resolved*, That proper measures be adopted to establish an institution of learning.

*Resolved*, That it be recommended to the attention of the annual conferences, avoiding, however, irredeemable debts.

Two things are worthy of note in this action. The first is the apparent almost complete unanimity which characterized the movement, indicating that these fathers were not averse to education in general, their opposition being, as before remarked, to an educated and unregenerate ministry. The second is their decided opposition to incurring debt, a principle to which their sons might have adhered with great advantage. In the appendage to the second resolution there is plainly visible the hand of the Kumlers and Russel, whose thrift and strong aversion to debt are alike remembered. It is also evident that the conference in this action contemplated the founding of but a single institution for the entire denomination. And when it is considered that the whole estimated membership of the Church was but the limited number given above, one school would seem to have been for a beginning quite enough. Such, however, was not the feeling of the Church, as was presently seen. When once the General Conference had spoken favorably, the impulse to build colleges soon widely asserted itself, and almost every conference took up the subject for discussion, and many of them for definite action. A number of schools

were almost immediately projected, most of which were of necessity destined soon to be absorbed or to perish altogether.

The Miami Conference was the first to respond to the action of the General Conference. At the session of this conference, held in Otterbein Chapel, in Darke County, Ohio, on March 3, 1846, a resolution was adopted proposing to unite with the conferences in central and northern Indiana to found a college at Bluffton, in the latter State, or at some other suitable point which might be chosen. The St. Joseph Conference, Indiana, at its session in Kosciusko County, in October following, entertained favorably the proposition of the Miami Conference, and appointed three trustees for the proposed college, the first trustees for a college appointed in the Church. These, it was intended, should coöperate with other trustees who might be appointed by other conferences. The subject received considerable discussion, both in private and in the columns of the *Religious Telescope*, but for some reason the college then proposed did not materialize.

The next movement toward college building took form in the Scioto Conference. This conference, convening in Pickaway County, Ohio, on October 26, 1846, was met by a delegation representing Blendon Young Men's Seminary, located at the town of Westerville, Ohio, and belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Ohio Wesleyan University, of that church, having just been projected at Delaware, Ohio, this seminary was left stranded, with a debt of one thousand three hundred dollars. The representatives of this institution came before the Scioto Conference with a proposition to transfer to the conference the property, with all its appurtenances, if the conference would agree to assume this indebtedness. The proposition had at least the semblance of being generous, and was

at once accepted. A board of trustees was appointed, and a resolution adopted inviting neighboring conferences to coöperate.

In the month of January following, 1847, the Indiana Conference, located in southern Indiana, resolved upon the building of a college either at Dublin or at Washington, in that State. A committee, consisting of C. Lynn, L. S. Chittenden, and J. Lopp, was appointed to invite the coöperation of the White River, St. Joseph, and Miami conferences. This scheme soon perished, but others were presently to follow. The Allegheny Conference had caught the spirit of the educational movement, and at its session beginning February 4 of the same year, 1847, at Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, a series of vigorous resolutions was adopted looking to the immediate building of a college, either at Mount Pleasant or at Johnstown. A committee was appointed to whom the matter was intrusted. This committee wisely determined to receive bids, and to locate the school at the place which offered the largest local subscription for the purchase of ground and the erection of buildings. The result was that Mount Pleasant was selected for the location, and in 1850 Mount Pleasant College was opened for the reception of students. In 1858 this college was absorbed by Otterbein University. The earnestness of the Allegheny brethren in the movement is indicated by the fact that the conference placed on record a resolution threatening censure upon any minister who should oppose with adverse influence the college agent in soliciting funds for the enterprise. Rev. J. Ritter, author of "*Ritter's Sketches*," was appointed the first traveling agent for the college.<sup>1</sup>

Two years later, in 1849, the Indiana conferences having failed to reach a successful coöperation, the quarterly con-

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., p. 373.

ference of Newbern Circuit decided to open a seminary in the town of Hartsville, in Bartholomew County. The Indiana Annual Conference within the same year supported this action of the quarterly conference, and subsequently the White River Conference gave its indorsement. The Wabash and St. Joseph conferences gave to the enterprise for a time a nominal support. The projectors, flattered with the seeming promise of success, soon gave to their school the pretentious name of Hartsville University. For a number of years, though carrying so large a title, the school did good work as an academy. The name was subsequently changed to Hartsville College. But a greater misfortune than even its financial or other limitations was destined to befall it, its trustees in the time of the radical defection succeeding in carrying it away with the secession. At the present time, whatever the future may yet hold for it, the fortunes of the institution have reached a low ebb.

Two other institutions, also the immediate outgrowth of the educational impulse which swept over the Church, remain to be noted. In 1853 the Illinois Conference, supported for a time by the Rock River, established an institution at Blandinsville, Illinois, known as Blandinsville Seminary. The school exerted a good influence for the Church for a time, but its support was insufficient to give promise of a future college, and it was later discontinued. Another was undertaken, with apparently fairer prospect, but equally destined to failure, by the Michigan Conference. An institution located at Leoni, known as Michigan Union College, owned by the Michigan Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, valued for college purposes at ten thousand dollars, but already a failure, was transferred to the Michigan Conference of the United Brethren Church. The name after the transfer was changed to Michigan



Collegiate Institute, and for a time the school under its new management seemed destined to reach fair success. But the Church in this State was not able to give it sufficient support in either money or students, and after an earnest struggle against the inevitable it was discontinued.

It would be an injustice to the colleges of the United Brethren Church to discount the value of their work on account of their comparative smallness, as contrasted with some of the older and more largely endowed institutions, and especially with the great universities. It is a well-recognized fact that the most thorough work is frequently done in the smaller institutions. Their classes numbering from a dozen to twenty students, instead of a hundred and upward, each individual student is brought into more direct contact with the professors, and the possibilities of better instruction, because more personal, are sufficiently manifest. The rank gained by their graduates when entering some of the large universities for the pursuit of post-graduate courses, and, more broadly, the distinction achieved in the various callings of life by those who have gone forth from these institutions, attest the substantial character of the work accomplished in the classroom. Here, as elsewhere, the words hold good, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

## II. OTTERBEIN UNIVERSITY.

The reader has seen that while the Miami Conference was the first among the annual conferences to take action looking toward the founding of an educational institution, the Scioto was the first to put such a movement into effect. This conference, at its session in Pickaway County, Ohio, in October, 1846, having accepted the proposition of the representatives of Blendon Young Men's

Seminary, as has been mentioned, appointed a board of trustees to take charge of the new enterprise. This board consisted of Mr. J. Dresbach and Revs. William Hanby and Lewis Davis. The trustees met at Circleville, in December following, and appointed Mr. Davis as soliciting agent for the school. Mr. Davis was also to visit neighboring annual conferences, and enlist their coöperation. A better selection for this important work could not have been made. Mr. Davis possessed in a high degree the qualities essential to success. He was cool and deliberate in his methods, possessed unlimited will power, thoroughly believed in the cause which he undertook to build up, and gave himself to it with all possible earnestness and determination. Two months later, in February, 1847, he visited the Sandusky Conference, whose session was held in Wood County. He presented to that body the enterprise undertaken by the brethren of the Scioto Conference, and asked for their coöperation. An earnest discussion followed, and a favorable vote was secured by a small majority, the conference agreeing to elect trustees and a soliciting agent. From this place Mr. Davis went to the Muskingum Conference, in session in Stark County, bringing to that body a like proposition. The conference, after a warm discussion, voted it down, and the resolute agent met his first real disappointment.

The trustees elected by the Scioto and Sandusky conferences met in session in Westerville on April 26, 1847. After free deliberation they decided that the name of the institution should be Otterbein University. It was most fitting that this pioneer school of the Church should be named for its great founder, Bishop Otterbein. The name university, however, was rather to be regarded as a prophecy to be realized in the future, for not even a college was at first attempted. The school was organized

as an academy, or seminary, its head bearing the appropriate title of principal, instead of president. Mr. William R. Griffith, a graduate of Asbury University, was chosen for this position, his associate teachers being Miss Mary Murray and Miss Sylvia Carpenter. It will be seen that this beginning was on a scale quite large enough, when we consider that the entire membership of the Church of that time, as we have already seen, did not exceed about thirty thousand, and, still further, that so far only two conferences were enlisted in the support of the work. On the 2d day of September, in that year, 1847, the doors of the school were opened for the admission of students. The attendance on the first day was not especially promising, only eight students presenting themselves. This number, however, was increased during the year to eighty-one, so that the aggregate results were highly encouraging. Such was the modest beginning of an institution which has in the process of time grown into a position of great honor in the denomination which has fostered it, as well as of distinguished standing among the colleges of the State in which it is located, and of the country as well.

Otterbein University from its beginning admitted students of both sexes to equal privileges in its courses of study, and the example was followed by Western and Lebanon Valley colleges, and all the other institutions of the Church. At the time of the founding of these earlier schools the principle of coeducation was still held in grave doubt by many educators, and many colleges and universities to the present day, especially in Europe, do not admit women to the same courses as men, or confer the same degrees upon the completion of the required work. The plan of coeducation has been found to work admirably, resulting not only in the encouragement of a higher

standard of personal deportment, with the almost total prevention of conduct even bordering upon hazing, but also in quickening a worthy ambition in study and the attainment of higher results in the classes.

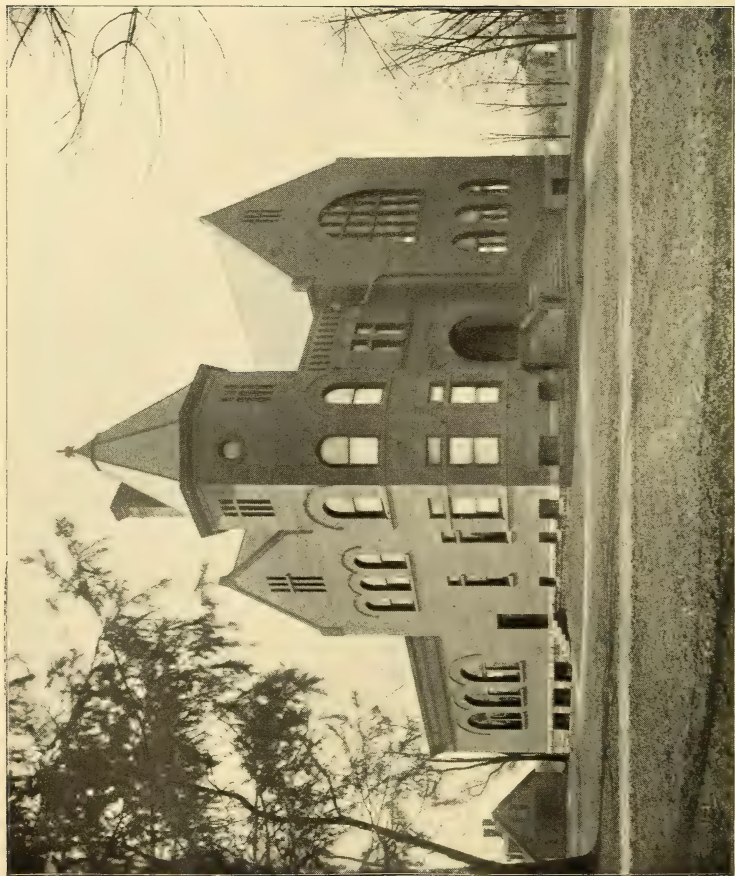
In these early days of the college its success depended greatly upon the energy and efficiency of its chief financial agent. It needed friends in other conferences besides the two which entered into coöperation at the first. Mr. Davis visited successive conferences, and the institution being now fairly started he found it less difficult to secure further support, several conferences being soon added to the list, including the Miami, and others. The conferences now uniting in the support of the college are the Scioto, the Miami, the Allegheny, the Auglaize, the Central Ohio, the East Ohio, the Erie, the North Ohio, the Ohio German, the Ontario, the Parkersburg, the Sandusky, and the St. Joseph.

The college had not long been founded when the question of connecting with it a system of manual labor was raised. The subject was freely discussed in the columns of the *Religious Telescope*, in the meetings of the board of trustees, and in the annual conferences. Some of the strongest friends of the college believed that it could be made really useful to the Church only if its students were required to cultivate habits of industry for hand as well as brain. Among those taking part in this discussion Rev. Henry Kumler, Jun., bore a prominent part. He was a liberal supporter of the college, but believed that the manual-labor feature was essential to its best success. In an article in the *Telescope* he spoke as follows: "Cannot institutions of learning be conducted without being made a curse to many, as we see they are? In many instances students, while at college, lay the foundations of both their physical and moral ruin. They too often





OTTERBEIN UNIVERSITY—MAIN BUILDING.



CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION BUILDING, OTTERBEIN UNIVERSITY.  
(FIRST COLLEGE ASSOCIATION BUILDING IN OHIO.)

return from college disinclined to labor, and profligate in their habits. . . . So far as I can learn, we of the Miami Conference will go in favor of an institution in which manual labor and worldly economy are taught, as well as letters and morality; no student to be admitted who is able, physically, to perform labor, and will not. . . . Out of such an institution we might expect the rich and the poor to come with the best intellectual stock, capable of enduring the hardships common to man in this rough world. . . . For such an institution our plain and honest people will go; for they want their children educated, but not at the sacrifice of their health, habits of industry, and immortal souls." And who shall find any fault with the logic of this view? After the lapse of nearly a half century we find a strong tendency toward the practical in the educational system of our country, and schools of technology are recognized as among the most honored and useful, while many of our best institutions have added a department of this character.<sup>1</sup>

Under the impulse of this agitation the trustees of Otterbein University were led to make provision for the manual-labor experiment, upon a plan which must of necessity work its own failure. The Church of that time was very largely rural; most of its ministers had come from the farm, and it was quite natural that farming was to constitute the chief feature in the manual-labor depart-

<sup>1</sup> As illustrating the liberal feeling of Mr. Kumler toward the college, though he was not a man of large wealth, it is related of him, that when he was in attendance at one of the early meetings of the board of trustees, of which he was a member, a college agent deferentially approached him, and expressed the hope that he would make a small contribution, at least ten dollars, toward the needs of the college. Mr. Kumler regarded him for a moment with a quizzical sort of expression, and replied that if the agent would give him ten dollars he would kick the whole thing down into Alum Creek, a small stream flowing through the lower lands near by. The college building which he meant to dispose of in this way was the old Blendon Seminary. He had in mind the erection of something better for the college, and before the board adjourned he had given his obligation for five hundred dollars toward the building of the new college edifice.



ment of the school. A farm was purchased, a superintendent was appointed, and the students were set to work. But the long winter season was unfavorable for farming, and in the summer came the long vacation. And as the young men were not to farm for the purpose of learning how,—a business which most of them understood pretty well,—but were to use the farm for the purposes of a gymnasium, no very great enthusiasm could be awakened among them. And so, despite the many warm discussions in the board of trustees, and the vigorous resolutions adopted and spread upon its records, and the numerous articles printed in the *Religious Telescope*, farming at Otterbein was doomed to perish. Very wisely, by and by, the farm was sold, and the proceeds applied to relieving the rapidly growing liabilities of the college.

The outbreak of the great Civil War in 1861 bore heavily against this institution, as against all the colleges of the land. The call to arms was heroically responded to by the young men of the country, and the colleges everywhere yielded up their full quota. So large was the proportion of Otterbein students enlisted that some of the classes were almost wholly depleted of their young men.

Soon after the opening of the college it became apparent that the old wooden building was insufficient for its uses, and arrangements were early made looking toward the erection of a new college building. A large building was erected, three stories in height, the rooms on the lower floors to be occupied for recitation, library, and other purposes, while on the upper floor there was a large room intended for a college chapel and to serve as a place of worship for the United Brethren congregation in Westerville. It would be difficult to conceive of a building less fortunately constructed with reference to specific purposes than was this first college building



erected by the Church. Yet it served its ends for a series of years until, in the night of January 26, 1870, it was consumed by fire. The loss of this building, with its library, cabinet, and scientific apparatus, was felt for a time to be a most serious calamity.<sup>1</sup> Steps were, however, immediately taken to repair the loss by the erection of a new building. The result was the rearing of the present commodious, handsomely designed, and convenient edifice. This building is one hundred and seventy by one hundred and four feet in extent, and two and three stories in height above the basement. It contains twenty-six rooms, including chapel, four literary halls, recitation, library, and reading rooms, and offices. In addition to this large building, the central figure of the group, there are three others—a ladies' hall, a conservatory of music, and a Christian Association and gymnasium building. The last-named is a students' enterprise. It is an extremely handsome structure, accommodating both a Young Men's and a Young Women's Christian Association, and is the first college Christian Association building erected in the State of Ohio. The grounds connected with the college, now finely shaded by a grove planted many years ago, comprise about eight and one-half acres. The buildings and grounds together are valued at about seventy thousand dollars.

The amount of endowment secured for the college is over eighty-two thousand dollars, to which are added contingent assets amounting to about sixty-two thousand

<sup>1</sup> Among the misfortunes most deeply regretted in connection with this fire was the loss of a copy of the famous Sinaitic Manuscript, of which there were but six in the United States. This copy, the special gift of the Russian Government to the university, was secured through the good offices of Prof. Julius Degmeier, who was at that time connected with the school, and who, through personal acquaintance with certain high European officials, was able to bring his request for the university to the favorable consideration of the Russian authorities. The loss was all the greater since it was necessarily impossible to replace it by another copy.

dollars. The total assets are over two hundred and seventeen thousand dollars. For many years the college struggled with debt, sometimes almost hopelessly. A few years ago it was resolved to raise the sum of eighty thousand dollars for its relief. A heroic effort was required before this amount was reached, but the greatly desired end was finally gained, and the college was placed upon a permanently assured foundation. Liabilities to some extent still remain to be provided for. In this effort to relieve the college some of its friends devoted so much time and effort, as well as money, as to deserve special mention here. Among these were Mr. David L. Rike and Mr. Samuel E. Kumler, of Dayton. The latter gave several months almost continuously to the work.

It would be impossible to estimate now, as the college has entered upon its semicentennial year, the amount of service it has accomplished. It has graduated in all since its founding four hundred and fifty-six students, while others who have been in attendance for longer or shorter periods, completing partial courses, are numbered by many thousands. Its graduates occupy positions of honor and responsibility, in ecclesiastical and civil life, in many different States of the Union. It would be equally impossible to forecast the future of this first school of the Church. Its rank is still that of a college, its place as a university, in the larger sense of the term, being still a dream to be realized in the future, as the needs and the liberality of the Church are alike enlarged. But its grade is high among the foremost of the colleges, and its friends may indulge the hope that it will in time attain to the distinguished position which its name indicates.

The following gentlemen have held the position of president of the college: William R. Griffith, A.M. (principal), 1847-49; Rev. William Davis, 1849-50; Rev. Lewis Davis,

D.D., 1850-57 and 1860-71 ; Rev. Alexander Owen, 1858-60 ; Rev. D. Eberly, D.D., 1871-72 ; Rev. H. A. Thompson, D.D., LL.D., 1872-86 ; Rev. Henry Garst, D.D., 1886-89 ; Hon. C. A. Bowersox, A.M., 1889-91 ; Rev. Thomas J. Sanders, Ph.D., 1891 to the present time. The faculty of the college at present comprises sixteen persons : Rev. T. J. Sanders, Ph.D., president and professor of philosophy ; John Haywood, LL.D., professor *emeritus* ; John E. Guitner, A.M., Greek language and literature ; Rev. Henry Garst, D.D., mental and moral philosophy and English Bible ; Louis H. McFadden, A.M., natural science ; George Scott, Ph.D., Latin language and literature ; Frank E. Miller, Ph.D., mathematics ; Tirza L. Barnes, B.S., English language and history, and principal of the ladies' department ; Rev. William J. Zuck, A.M., English language and literature ; Rudolph H. Wagoner, A.B., assistant in Latin and principal of preparatory and normal departments ; Josephine Johnson, M.A., modern languages and literature ; Rev. W. O. Fries, A.M., Christian evidences ; Isabel A. Sevier, drawing and painting ; Gustav Meyer, director conservatory of music ; M. Luther Peterson, voice culture ; Frank S. Fox, A.M., elocution.

Some of the men connected with the college have given it long periods of service. John Haywood, LL.D., was elected professor of mathematics in 1851, and, with the exception of a few years, has remained in the college to the present time. He has occasionally, in the division of labor, taught also natural science. In 1893, on account of increasing years, he was relieved of full duty, and was elected professor *emeritus*. He is in the forty-first year of his connection with the college.

Thomas McFadden, A.M., M.D., became connected with the college in 1858 as professor of natural science. He died

in 1884, after a continuous service of twenty-six years, except a short period spent in the War as an army surgeon.

John E. Guitner, A.M., a graduate of the college, was elected professor of the Greek language and literature in 1862. He has remained in this connection continuously since, being now in the thirty-fifth year of his service.

Henry Garst, D.D., also a graduate of the college, was elected professor of the Latin language and literature in 1869. He was president from 1886 to 1889, three years, since which time he occupies the chair of mental and moral philosophy and English Bible. He is in the twenty-eighth year of continuous service.

Dr. H. A. Thompson, a graduate of Washington and Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, was elected professor of mathematics and natural science in 1862. He was president from 1872 to 1886; professor of logic and rhetoric 1886-87, serving through a period of twenty-five years.

Dr. T. J. Sanders, a graduate of Otterbein University, title Ph.D. received from Wooster University on examination, was elected president in 1891. He possesses learning and fine enthusiasm. His accession inspired the friends of the college to the recent extraordinary effort to relieve it of its nearly hopeless embarrassment. He may safely be thought of as one of the younger men of the Church for whom there is an assured future.

Among those who, after Dr. Davis, performed most efficient service for the college as financial managers were Revs. J. Weaver, J. M. Spangler, J. B. Resler, C. W. Miller, and S. M. Hippard. Mr. John Knox, as a member of the prudential committee, has been one among the safest of the financial counselors. The present executive committee of the general finance committee are Mr. S. E. Kumler, Rev. W. J. Shuey, Mr. John Gerlaugh, Mr. Fred. H. Rike, and Prof. Albert B. Shauck.



## III. WESTERN COLLEGE.

The first steps looking toward the founding of an institution of learning by the United Brethren Church west of the Mississippi River were taken by the Iowa Annual Conference at a session held at Muscatine in August, 1855. After a full consideration of a proposition for this end a board of trustees was elected, charged with the duty of proceeding immediately to the work. This first board consisted of Revs. Solomon Weaver, W. G. Miller, Joseph Miller, Daniel Runkle, and Mr. Jonathan Neidig. The board was instructed "as soon as possible to select a site for the location of the college, in as convenient a place as possible for the whole Church in Iowa." It was decided that the new institution should be known as "Western College of the United Brethren in Christ."

At a meeting held in February, 1856, the trustees accepted a tract of land lying in the open prairie, near Shueyville, in Linn County, for a location, and soon afterward commenced the erection of the main building. The town springing up around it took the name of Western. The Des Moines Conference, having resolved to coöperate with the Iowa, elected J. Hopkins and C. Witt as trustees, and at the meeting in October Solomon Weaver was elected president of the college. The work on the building was pushed vigorously, and on January 1, 1857, the doors were opened for the reception of students. The other members of the faculty for the opening term were S. S. Dillman, Mrs. E. S. Dillman, and J. C. Shrader.

The manual-labor system, which had been so elaborately discussed in the columns of the *Religious Telescope* in connection with Otterbein University,—with much greater success in type than in the furrows of the farm,—was regarded with favor by the founders of Western College. The trustees adopted the plan, provided a farm, and after

five years of effort to run it with student labor abandoned it as a failure. The school from the beginning, as all the schools of the United Brethren Church, admitted both sexes to equal privileges in the classes.

Within a few years after the opening of the school the great War of the Rebellion broke out. The effect upon the college classes was most decided. So many of the students, with two professors, in loyal obedience to their country's call, left the recitation room for the camp and the front that scarcely a man of military age was left, and some of the classes, as to their male members, were completely broken up. And so disastrous were the effects of the War upon the attendance at the college that for several years its grade was lowered, and its presidents were known by the title of principal.

The successive presidents of Western College, with their terms of service, were as follows: Rev. Solomon Weaver, 1856-64; Rev. William Davis, 1864-65; M. W. Bartlett, A.M. (principal), 1865-67; H. R. Page, A.B. (principal), fall term, 1867-68; E. C. Ebersole, A.M. (principal), 1867-68; E. B. Kephart, D.D., 1868-81; W. M. Beardshear, D.D., 1881-89; J. S. Mills, D.D., Ph.D., 1889-92; A. M. Beal, A.M., 1892-93; A. P. Funkhouser, B.S., 1893-94; Lewis Bookwalter, D.D., 1894 to the present. The faculty at this time embraces twelve persons. Those in the regular college departments are as follows: Rev. Lewis Bookwalter, D.D., president and professor of philosophy; B. F. McClelland, vice-president and professor of English literature and principal of preparatory and normal departments; Edward L. Colebeck, A.M., Latin and Greek languages; B. A. Sweet, M.S., natural science; Raymond E. Bower, Ph.B., mathematics; Maud Fulkerson, A.M., German and French. Other departments, including music, art, commerce, physical culture, and so on, such as are usually connected with the best



WESTERN COLLEGE—MAIN BUILDING.





colleges, are fully provided for. The whole number of graduates of the college from the beginning is one hundred and ninety-six. The number of students in attendance during the year closing June, 1896, was two hundred and thirty-five. A very large proportion of the students have entered the gospel ministry. Fifty-two of its graduates, or over one-fourth of the entire number, not taking account of others who have attended the college for shorter periods, have been enrolled either as ministers or as missionaries. Six of the missionaries of the Church now in the foreign field are graduates from this college. That so many of its young people should have entered the sacred calling speaks volumes for the religious conditions which have marked the progressive life of the college. The religious life is further emphasized by the organization of a Young Men's and a Young Women's Christian Association, each earnest and aggressive in its work.

The removal of the college from its original location to its present most desirable situation was an event of the greatest importance to the institution. The first location had long been felt to be an unfortunate one, and a desire was widely entertained to secure for it a more favorable position. But the removal of a college from one place to another is always a difficult undertaking, and is seldom attempted. The step was, however, at last fully resolved upon, and in the year 1881, a quarter of a century from the time of the founding, the transfer was made to the beautiful city of Toledo, in the same State. Preparatory to this suitable grounds were secured and the necessary buildings erected. Eight years subsequent to this time the college was doomed to meet with a most serious disaster, quite like that which had befallen Otterbein University some years before. On Christmas night in 1889 the main building was consumed by fire,

all its contents, the library alone excepted, perishing with it. Steps were immediately taken for rebuilding, and, through the prompt liberality of the people of Toledo and the friends of the college elsewhere, the present very handsome edifice soon arose from the ashes of that which was destroyed. This building is in extent one hundred and fifty feet by eighty, and three stories in height above the basement. It is rich in its architectural design. The walls are of brick, with stone ornamentation. It is fitted up with the most approved methods of heating, and is justly regarded as one of the best college buildings in the State. Its large and inviting rooms for the various requirements of a college adapt it alike to the needs of teachers and students. Other buildings, as the Bright Conservatory of Music, Mary Beatty Hall, the boarding hall for young ladies, and Drury Hall, the young men's boarding hall, are connected with the college. The college church, a model of architectural excellence, with a seating capacity of a thousand, is admirably adapted to the requirements of a church and Sunday school. The grounds connected with the college embrace an area of sixteen acres. The entire property—buildings, grounds, and equipments—is valued at about seventy thousand dollars. The conferences now coöperating with the college, including the original two, are the Iowa, the Des Moines, the Rock River, the Wisconsin, the Minnesota, and the Colorado.

The founding and building of Western College, like that of most educational institutions when resources are limited, called for the exercise of true Christian heroism. The first among those to urge the building of a college for the Church west of the Mississippi River, was Rev. Solomon Weaver, an older brother of Bishop Weaver. Mr. Weaver was not only first in the board of trustees, but was also elected the first president of the college. Like some others

who have gained distinction as college presidents, in our own and other denominations, he possessed but a limited scholastic education. But he had that which the college, whatever it may do in developing, can never supply—the original fiber. He had strong native sense, a clear intellect, and great earnestness of purpose. His views respecting the establishment of colleges for the Church were much in advance of those of most of the ministers and people at that time. His work in connection with the founding and early progress of Western College accomplished most important results for the Church. In 1864 he resigned the presidency, and removed to Kansas. He died in December, 1874.

His successor as president of Western College, for a single year only, was Rev. William Davis, earlier of the Miami Conference. Mr. Davis was a preacher of great eloquence and power, but lacking in the elements requisite for the successful management of a college. Before removing to the West he had served for a brief period as president of Otterbein University. His memory in the Miami Conference, where a part of his ministerial life was passed, is tenderly cherished.

Dr. E. B. Kephart, a graduate of Otterbein University, was called to the presidency in 1868. He served for thirteen years, when he was elected by the General Conference of 1881 to the office of bishop. During the period of the War the attendance had so far declined that for three years the board of trustees had not elected a president. Dr. Kephart inaugurated at once a vigorous administration, both in the college and in its general affairs. The collegiate work proper was reorganized, and in 1872, four years after he became its head, the college graduated a class of ten. During the thirteen years of his management seventy young people took their diplomas.

In the year 1881, that of the removal, a strong hand was needed to guide the affairs of the college, and the trustees were fortunate in selecting for its president Rev. William M. Beardshear, a graduate of Otterbein University and a member of Miami Conference. Dr. Beardshear's ability and energy, joined with the impetus and inspiration of a relocation in a new and promising field, made his eight years of service a signal success. The college during this period advanced well to the front, so as to gain recognition among the foremost colleges of the State.

Rev. J. S. Mills—Bishop Mills since May, 1893—was called from the chair of English literature and rhetoric in the college to the presidency in 1889, serving in that relation until 1892. He had scarcely entered fully upon his work when the disastrous Christmas fire swept away the main college building, and brought with it the greatest inconvenience for faculty and students during the remainder of the college year, as well as the necessity of providing immediately for the erection of a new building. The work was undertaken in a heroic spirit, and through the liberality and energy of those interested a new and more commodious building soon took the place of that which had been destroyed.

During the years immediately following, those in charge found it necessary to divide their time between the work in the college and attention to the financial situation. Prof. A. M. Beal and Rev. A. P. Funkhouser served each one year as president. The weakening of the financial conditions and the temporary loss of credit made the situation embarrassing and the work difficult.

It was under these circumstances, in 1894, that Lewis Bookwalter, D.D., a graduate of the college, who had occupied the chair of the Latin and Greek languages from 1873 to 1879, was called to the presidency. Dr. Bookwalter, at



that time in the sixth year of the pastorate of the First United Brethren Church in Dayton, Ohio, accepted the responsibility, and at once addressed himself with great earnestness to the work. Under his direction the faculty has been reorganized, the general management placed upon a more economic basis, the debt materially reduced, and the number of students largely increased. Some large donations have been made by men of means, and in every way the outlook for the future has become more hopeful.

But to write thus of a college, making mention chiefly of the heads of its faculty, and leaving out of view those who have borne the principal care of the financial burdens, is a grave injustice to some who have rendered eminent service in this less conspicuous relation. Among those who have served longest and most efficiently in this less ornate but equally essential service, may be mentioned the Rev. M. S. Drury, father of Prof. A. W. Drury, of Union Biblical Seminary, and of Dr. M. R. Drury, of the *Religious Telescope*. Rev. L. H. Bufkin is another who has toiled long and laboriously in this often thankless yet necessary service. Among others as chief supporters and friends of the college may be named Dr. E. R. Smith, of Toledo.

#### IV. WESTFIELD COLLEGE.

Westfield College, located at the town of Westfield, Illinois, was founded in 1865. It was the larger outgrowth of an academy which was organized in the same place three years before. The Lower and the Upper Wabash were the conferences coöperating at the first. To these have since been added the Illinois, Central Illinois, and Indiana conferences. The first president of the college was Rev. Samuel B. Allen, D.D., previously

a professor in Otterbein University, the other members of the faculty being Professors W. R. Shuey, A.M., W. T. Jackson, A.M., Ph.D., W. O. Tobey, A.M., and Mrs. Rachel Tobey, M.A. President Allen died in 1879, after a laborious service of fourteen years. Professor Tobey was elected joint editor of the *Religious Telescope* in 1873. Dr. Allen was succeeded in the presidency by Dr. Lewis Bookwalter, now president of Western College, Iowa. He served two years, and was succeeded by Dr. I. L. Kephart, now editor of the *Religious Telescope*, who served five years. After him came Dr. W. H. Klinefelter, who, after a service of six years, resigned, in 1895, to return to the pastorate. He is now pastor of the Summit Street Church, at Dayton, Ohio. He was succeeded by Prof. B. L. Seneff, A.B., who is the incumbent at the present time.

The college building is pleasantly located in a campus of six acres of ground. It is in extent forty by one hundred feet, with cross extensions forty feet in depth. It is of brick, two stories in height, and contains all the requisite rooms for the various uses of the college. The incorporators and original board of trustees were W. C. Smith, A. Helton, D. Ross, S. Mills, H. Elwell, E. R. Connelly, D. Evinger, and J. H. Coons. These men, with others who have followed, have spent years of laborious toil in their efforts to build up this college. The connection of Rev. W. C. Smith with the college as trustee, and much of the time as agent, has remained unbroken from the beginning, with the exception of two years at one time, and perhaps no man in the denomination has toiled more unremittingly, or with greater devotion and self-sacrifice, in building up any of our institutions, through dark days as well as through bright, than he. An embarrassing debt, formed long ago, which had remained as a burden

upon the college, was recently liquidated, so that the institution is now without liability. The value of the property—building and grounds—is estimated at about twenty-five thousand dollars.

The faculty at the present time, in all the departments, embraces twelve persons; six of these are in the regular academic department, as follows: Rev. B. L. Seneff, A.B., president and professor of mental and moral science; Rev. William R. Shuey, A.M., vice-president, mathematics; A. C. Streich, A.B., Latin and Greek; Miss Sarah L. Newell, Ph.B., English literature, German, and history; W. R. Rhodes, natural science; C. E. Bigelow, A.M., preparatory department. Professor Shuey's connection with the college has remained unbroken from the first, and for twenty-five years he has occupied the chair of mathematics. The college has graduated from the beginning, from the regular collegiate departments, one hundred and twenty-seven students. The attendance during the year 1895-96 was one hundred and forty-eight. A number of departments, such as are usually found in connection with colleges, are well represented, as music, art, business, shorthand, typewriting. The courses of study in the regular college department are being extended as rapidly as means will permit, and the college, now that its embarrassing financial condition is relieved, hopes to add steadily to the already excellent advantages which it offers to the young people of the Church. The church membership from which it draws its students, as well as material resources, numbers about thirty thousand.

#### V. LANE UNIVERSITY.

About the year 1864 a considerable amount of interest was awakened among the United Brethren in Kansas on the subject of education. This interest was largely stimu-

lated by the coming to Kansas of Rev. Solomon Weaver, who had been president of Western College. Kansas Conference at that time included all of the State of Kansas, with portions of Nebraska and Missouri. Favorable action was taken by the conference looking toward the building of a college, and the proposed institution was located at the town of Lecompton, situated fifteen miles east of Topeka, and fifty miles west of Kansas City, Missouri. The college was named Lane University, the name being given in honor of James H. Lane, who was one of the first United States Senators from Kansas, and a prominent and helpful factor in Kansas affairs in that troublous period. The coöperating conferences interested in this institution are the Kansas, Neosho, and Arkansas Valley. Support is derived from Northwest Kansas and Southwest Kansas conferences, but they do not directly coöperate. The courses of study provided are those usual to colleges, such as classical, scientific, literary, normal, and music.

Rev. Solomon Weaver is regarded as the founder of Lane University, and he was its first president. The first faculty included the names of Rev. David Shuck and Miss Nettie Stickney. The beginning was thus modestly made, in harmony with the circumstances then existing. President Weaver continued in the service of the college two years. His successors were Rev. Daniel Shuck, four years; N. B. Bartlett, eleven years; L. S. Tohill, one year; S. B. Ervin, D.D., four years; J. A. Weller, D.D., four years. Dr. C. M. Brooke was elected in June, 1891, and continues to the present.

The buildings and grounds of the college are of ample proportions. The grounds embrace an area of fifteen acres. Thirteen acres are included in the main college campus. This land once constituted the grounds for the State capitol, and in it were laid the massive foundations for a State



building. Before the work had gone further, the capital was removed to Topeka, and the State subsequently donated this ground to the college. On a portion of this foundation the main college building was erected. This building is forty-five by seventy-five feet in extent, and three stories in height, with basement. The other building is sixty-four by fifty-six feet, two stories in height, with basement. Both are substantially constructed, and covered with iron roofs. In the main building there are six recitation rooms, an auditorium, two literary society halls, a room for experimental work in chemistry, and one for a similar purpose in physics. The other building contains library, music, reception, dining, and commercial rooms, fifty in all, twenty-four of the number for students. The property is valued, at a conservative estimate, at thirty thousand dollars.

The institution was founded originally on the responsibility of leading members of the Church in Kansas, who operated it for a time as a private enterprise in form, but really for the Church. This arrangement proving unsatisfactory to the membership, the institution, with all that pertained to it, was transferred in fee simple to a board of trustees elected by the Kansas Conference, thus becoming the property of the Church. The college has been fortunate in avoiding a heavy indebtedness. In 1891, when Dr. Brooke took the presidency, the liabilities amounted to only a little over twelve thousand dollars. This debt has since been reduced to six thousand five hundred dollars, with all current expenses paid. Dr. Brooke has brought fine tact and energy to the service of the college, and his work in building it up in its various departments has led to most gratifying results.

Lane University has gained for itself an honorable position among the higher institutions of learning in the

State. It belongs to the State association of Kansas colleges, and its president is secretary of that association. In issuing certificates to teachers the State Board of Education accepts the work done at Lane without question. The college has graduated in its higher departments sixty-eight students, and from special courses thirty-seven. It has an attendance of about two hundred students for the current year.

The faculty for the present year stands as follows: Charles Morgan Brooke, A.M., D.D., president and professor of philosophy and sociology; Norman Bruce Bartlett, A.M., Ph.D., history and pedagogy; Joshua Nizely Bank, A.B., Greek and Latin; John Sullivan Brooke, A.M., mathematics; Elijah Sheridan Andis, A.B., science; Gabriel Marion Huffman, D.D., biblical history and literature; Martha Wilson, instructor in school of music; Bishop J. W. Hott, D.D., conductor of divinity school; E. S. Andis, school of commerce.

For a little over thirty years this institution has been quietly pursuing its way, offering the advantages of a liberal education to the young people of the Church in Kansas. It has not yet attained the eminence which its projectors and friends had hoped it would gain, but it has accomplished an important service to the Church in Kansas, and with the continued growth of the Church in numbers and strength it has before it the prospect of a greatly enlarged future.

#### VI. LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE.

Lebanon Valley College, one of the early educational institutions of the Church, was founded in the year 1866. It is located in the town of Annville, Pennsylvania, and is in part the outgrowth of the earlier Annville Academy, which was founded in 1834. This school was built by

private enterprise, and became the chief source of education to a large number of men who attained to prominence in church and state in eastern Pennsylvania. When it became known that the East Pennsylvania Conference desired to establish somewhere within its bounds an institution of a higher grade, the owners and trustees of Annville Academy proposed to transfer that school, with all its property, to the conference. Among the gentlemen interested in the academy were Mr. Rudolph Herr, Judge John H. Kinports, Rev. George A. Mark, Rev. L. W. Craumer, Mr. George W. Hooverter, and others. The proposition thus made was favorably entertained and accepted by the conference, and the property was accordingly transferred to a duly appointed board of trustees in the year 1866. Additional ground was soon after purchased, necessary new buildings were erected, a faculty was provided, and the institution entered upon its new career as Lebanon Valley College. A charter, liberal in its provisions, was granted it by the legislature of Pennsylvania in the year 1867. At different subsequent times the Pennsylvania, East German, Virginia, and Maryland conferences became interested with the East Pennsylvania Conference in the ownership and support of the college. The first faculty of the college consisted of Thomas R. Vickroy, Ph.D., John Krumbine, E. Benjamin Bierman, A.M., Ph.D., Miss Ellen L. Walker, and Miss Lizzie M. Rigler.

The buildings of this college, three in number, are located upon a fine campus of about ten acres, and are together valued at about sixty-one thousand dollars. The main building is a large brick edifice, provided with college chapel, recitation rooms, society halls, reading-room, and gymnasium, besides dormitories for young men. A second building contains the library, an art room, and music

rooms, with the entire department of natural sciences, including laboratory and museum. A third building, known as the Ladies' Hall, is the home of the young ladies attending the institution. The endowment of the institution, which it is earnestly desired to augment, amounts at the present time to seventy thousand dollars. The number of students in attendance during the past year was one hundred and forty. The number of its graduates up to the present is two hundred and twenty-seven, while the number attending its classes since its founding, for longer or shorter periods, has reached the ample figure of about twenty-five hundred. It is thus apparent that the institution has served a generous mission in the work of promoting higher education, both in and out of the Church.

The courses of instruction offered are very complete, in every way equal to those pertaining to institutions of its grade. To these are added post-graduate courses leading to the degree of doctor of philosophy. The college library contains over five thousand volumes, being supplemented by nearly two thousand more in the halls of the literary societies. Among the organizations connected with the college are Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, which exert a healthful influence in the Christian development of the young people attending the institution. Added to the library is a cabinet representing various branches of natural science, as mineralogy, geology, and zoölogy.

The present faculty embraces nine instructors, with Dr. Bierman at the head as president and professor of mental and moral science. The others are H. Clay Deaner, A.M., in the chair of the Latin language and literature, and astronomy; John E. Lehman, A.M., professor of mathematics; Rev. J. A. McDermad, A.M., Greek language and



literature ; Oscar Ellis Good, A.M., natural science ; Fannie A. Allis, A.B., modern languages and English literature ; Carrie M. Flint, instrumental music ; Carrie E. Smith, harmony and theory ; Stocks Hammond, Mus. Doc., voice culture ; Sadie A. Light, elocution, and Leah C. Hartz, stenography and typewriting. The gentlemen who have occupied the chair of president of the college since its founding are as follows : From 1866 to 1871, Thomas R. Vickroy, Ph.D. ; 1871-76, Lucian H. Hammond ; 1876-87, D. D. DeLong, D.D. ; 1887-89, Edmund S. Lorenz, A.M. ; 1889-90, Cyrus J. Kephart, D.D. ; 1890 to the present time, Dr. Bierman.

It is no disparagement to the excellent work done in the college, and under the careful management of the gentlemen who have preceded Dr. Bierman in the position of president, to say that under his administration the college has made steady advancement toward better conditions. The college work done has been of a high grade. The liabilities have been materially reduced, additions to the endowment fund have been made, and in general the outlook for the college is full of promise for the future.

#### VII. PHILOMATH COLLEGE.

Philomath College, located in the town of Philomath, Benton County, Oregon, was chartered in November, 1865, and opened its doors for students in September, 1867. It is under the auspices of the Oregon Conference. It has never attained to large proportions, owing, more than to any other cause, to the extreme radicalism which proved so troublesome during a long series of years, in several portions of the Church, and which nowhere acquired a greater intensity than in the Oregon Conference. Nevertheless, the college, though working under so great disadvantages, has given a better equipment for the battles of

life to a very considerable number of students. The town of Philomath is essentially a college town, its building having chiefly followed that of the college, and the college itself giving the name to the town. The college buildings are located in a beautiful campus containing eleven acres. Besides this an inviting grove of three acres, a half mile distant, and situated on the banks of St. Mary's River, is owned by the college. On this ground the commencement and other general exercises are held. The location of the college and town is one of the most attractive to be found in that State, which abounds so much in the picturesque. It is situated in the far-famed Willamette Valley, at the foot of the lofty Coast Range. St. Mary's Peak, the highest elevation in the range, is but a few miles away, while Mount Jefferson, Mount Hood, and Three Sisters are plainly visible. With cooling air from the mountains on the one side, and the invigorating sea breezes from the other, the location is peculiarly fine and healthful.

The college began its work in a modest way, with but two teachers, Joseph Hannon and E. Woodward, at the first. Mr. Hannon was succeeded in the following year by E. P. Henderson, and Mr. Henderson by James Chambers, A.M., each serving but a single year. Mr. J. A. Biddle, A.B., was head of the school for two years, from 1870 to 1872, when he was succeeded by J. R. N. Sellwood, A.M., one year. Rev. R. E. Williams, A.M., followed, 1873-76, when Rev. W. S. Walker succeeded to a service of eight years, 1876-84. Others followed: G. A. Miller, 1884-86; Major Thomas Bell, A.M., 1886-87; Rev. James C. Keezel, 1887-89; Rev. W. S. Gilbert, A.M., 1889-93; Rev. P. O. Bonebrake, A.M., 1893-95, and Rev. B. E. Emrick, A.B., 1895 to the present. The present faculty embraces four persons; in the college department proper, Rev. B. E. Emrick, A.B., and Henry Sheak, M.S.

The value of the college buildings and grounds is estimated at about ten thousand dollars. There is an endowment of five thousand five hundred dollars, bearing interest at ten per cent., and about an equal amount involved in uncertainty. In addition to this, the college owns a considerable property in town lots. The Oregon Pacific Railroad runs through the college campus, thus connecting the place conveniently with the rest of the world.

This college, as well as the conference in which it is located, suffered greatly in the recent agitations preceding and following the radical secession. The legal conflict for possession of the college has been elsewhere referred to.<sup>1</sup> With the legal troubles settled, the outlook for both the college and Church is brightening.

#### VIII. AVALON COLLEGE.

This institution, at first located at Avalon, Missouri, was founded in the year 1869, the supporting conferences being the Missouri and Southern Missouri. Like all the colleges of the Church it began its career upon a scale of unpretentious proportions, its faculty at the first consisting of only three persons, Rev. M. H. Ambrose, Miss Lizzie Hanby, and Miss Frankie McNeil. The school was maintained at Avalon until the year 1890, when, to secure better advantages of location, it was removed to Trenton, in the same State. The removal was effected under the direction of President F. A. Z. Kumler, who became the head of the institution four years previously, in 1886. The gains made by the removal were far larger than simply those of greater convenience, the finances of the college being by this step immensely improved. Under the wise foresight of President Kumler a valuable tract of land was secured. This was laid out in lots to be sold for the benefit of the college,

<sup>1</sup>P. 396.

and the result was a generous fund for the erection of a building, and something further for its permanent endowment. A well-planned and commodious college building, containing thirty rooms, was erected, at a cost of forty thousand dollars. The building is heated by steam, lighted with electricity, and in every way thoroughly modern in its appointments. Its chapel, seated in the most approved manner, accommodates six hundred persons. The grounds retained for the college campus embrace four acres.

President Kumler, when assuming the duties of his office ten years ago, having become financial director as well as president proper, wisely resolved that the school must be conducted without incurring debt, and firmly held to this purpose. When the college was removed to Trenton, he entered the new field without money. But with full faith in the wisdom of the change and in the working out of his plans, he rented a hall and began work. He succeeded in keeping all expenses paid, and in two years was ready to present to the Church the splendid building which he had erected, a property, with the lands pertaining to it, valued at fifty thousand dollars—this upon the single condition that the Church make sale of lots to the extent of twenty thousand dollars. Writing of the result, two years ago, President Kumler said, "The Church has sold the twenty thousand dollars' worth of lots, and now the college is free from debt, the only college in the Church of which this may be said." He adds that about one hundred new houses had been erected near the college within two years, and that the future of the institution was altogether hopeful.

The college faculty at the present time embraces twelve members, as follows: F. A. Z. Kumler, A.M., president, E. B. Cassell, A.M., C. F. Emerick, M.S., A.M., F. E. Washburn, A.M., Mrs. F. A. Z. Kumler, L.B., in the college department



proper; in other departments, J. H. Drake, Mrs. E. B. Cassell, and H. E. Beals. The whole number of graduates from the founding of the college to the present time is sixty-two. The amount of its endowment is ten thousand dollars.

#### IX. SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE.

This institution, located at Woodbridge, California, was founded in the year 1879. In 1878 the citizens of Woodbridge and vicinity purchased seven acres of land adjoining the place, and erected thereon a commodious school building. In the year following the property was transferred to the California Conference, and on September 10, 1879, the institution was formally dedicated by Bishop Castle.

On the day following the dedication the school was opened for the reception of students, with Prof. D. A. Mobley, A.M., as principal and Prof. E. H. Ridenour assisting, no college grade being at the first attempted. The school grew rapidly in popularity and in the attendance of students, so that in a few years the trustees felt that the time had come for placing it upon a broader basis and advancing it to the grade of a college. In May, 1883, a new charter was obtained, the institution then taking the name of San Joaquin Valley College. Meanwhile, there had been added to the faculty Rev. W. H. Klinefelter, A.M., later president of Westfield College, Illinois, as professor of natural science, and Rev. I. L. Kephart, D.D., also at one time president of Westfield, and now editor of the *Religious Telescope*, as professor of mental and moral science. The first class, consisting of four members, was graduated in 1885.

When the school was raised to the grade of a college, Professor Mobley was elected president. He continued in that relation for eight years, when he resigned, after having

been for twelve years the head of the school. Rev. J. G. Huber, A.M., was elected his successor, in 1891, and two years later, in 1893, was succeeded by W. J. Ham, LL.B. Professor Ham resigned in 1895, when Rev. A. L. Cowell, B.D., was elected to succeed him. The faculty at the present time consists of A. L. Cowell, president and professor of mental and moral science; W. J. Ham, professor of natural science; Rev. Theodore A. Waltrip, B.D., professor of history and principal of business department; Miss Ella Jahant, Ph.B., teacher of music. The departments of literature and mathematics are for the present distributed among other members of the faculty.

The college offers three full courses of study—classical, philosophical, and scientific, each requiring four years, with a preparatory course of three years. It has graduated fifty-one persons—twenty-eight gentlemen and twenty-three ladies.

The college building is a large two-story edifice, having on its second floor a spacious chapel, with a sufficient number of other rooms to meet present requirements. The college has a well-selected library, a good museum and philosophical apparatus, and handsomely furnished halls for its literary societies.

The institution is necessarily dependent in large degree upon the people of other denominations, being owned by but a single conference of less than a thousand members, and this support comes in generous degree. It is apparent that with but one conference to support this college, and that conference having but so small a membership, it must struggle with unusual difficulty in carrying forward its work, and surprise must be felt that it has accomplished such results as have been reached, and that, instead of a debt of a few thousand dollars, it is not actually overwhelmed with embarrassment.

## X. UNION COLLEGE.

The question of founding an institution to meet the local educational needs of the United Brethren in West Virginia had been under frequent consideration previous to the year 1881. A larger emphasis was given to this thought by the advent of two young men from Otterbein University, Revs. J. O. Stevens and L. F. John, who conducted select schools of short terms in the summer of that year in Lewis and Upshur counties, the latter at Buckhannon. The success of these schools attracted the attention of some of the members of the Parkersburg Conference, among them Dr. Z. Warner, Rev. W. M. Weekley, Rev. Columbus Hall, and others. Professor Stevens took supervision of the public schools of Buckhannon from 1881 to 1883, and gathered about him many of the foremost young people of that part of the State. Not having completed his course at Otterbein University, he returned there to pursue further studies, when he was soon smitten down by the hand of death.

On his retirement from Buckhannon, for a temporary period, as was his thought, Professor John took his position, ably assisted by Mrs. Stevens. Under his direction the type of the school was changed, making it practically a church school, and this character it soon fully assumed. In the same year, 1883, ground was broken for a new building, and a structure with ample conveniences for the uses of an academy was in due time erected. Several courses of study, as classical, philosophical, teachers' normal, commercial, and musical, were arranged. Apparatus was purchased, the nucleus of a library was secured, the teaching force was increased, and soon the school was in successful operation.

In June, 1885, Professor John resigned, and Prof. W. S. Reese, Ph.M., took the principalship for one year. In

1886 Rev. W. O. Fries, A.M., a graduate of Lebanon Valley College, was elected principal. He continued for three years, when he was succeeded by Rev. W. O. Mills, A.M., a graduate of Otterbein University. Professor Mills has remained at the head of the institution to the present, being now in the tenth year of his work. The school has until recently borne the name of West Virginia Normal and Classical Academy, instead of the larger name of college, and, as such, has done most excellent service for the young people of West Virginia, both in and out of the Church. The annual attendance, as shown by the catalogues, has varied between the numbers of one hundred and ten and one hundred and fifty. The number of the graduates in the literary department is forty-eight.

For several years past negotiations have been in progress with the Methodist Protestant Church in West Virginia for a transfer of a half interest in the college to that denomination. The two churches are so far alike in doctrinal beliefs and all essentials of government that it is thought they can coöperate harmoniously in educational work. The final details of the union are at this writing about completed.

#### XI. YORK COLLEGE.

One of the newest of the colleges of the United Brethren Church was opened for the reception of students, at York, Nebraska, in August, 1890. This institution, earlier known as Gibbon Institute, at Gibbon, Nebraska, is under the care of the East Nebraska, West Nebraska, Elkhorn and Dakota, and Colorado conferences. It offers the usual courses of study pertaining to colleges—classical, scientific, normal, commercial, music, art, elocution, and so on. Rev. J. George, D.D., became its first president, and continued in that relation for several years. Other members of the original



faculty were, in the college proper, A. B. Statton, Miss Elnora Dickman, Miss Florence Williams, and in the adjunct departments, O. P. Wilson, Mrs. W. E. Morgan, and Mrs. E. J. Wightman. The faculty at the present time embraces, in all its departments, eleven members. Five of these are in the regular collegiate departments: President W. S. Reese, Ph.M., higher mathematics and philosophy; Abbie C. Burns, A.M., modern languages and literature; Maud Acton Bradrick, A.B., Greek and Latin; J. E. Maxwell, A.M., natural science; Charles N. Hinds, A.M., history and English language.

The principal college building is an imposing edifice, built of brick and stone, four stories in height, including the basement. It contains twenty-nine rooms, and is heated throughout by steam. Its chapel has seats for about eight hundred persons. The corner-stone for this handsome structure was laid by Bishop Kephart in June, 1891, and the dedicatory services of the completed building were conducted by Dr. William M. Beardshear in the following year. The grounds embrace about nine acres. The building and grounds are valued at about thirty-five thousand dollars. An important provision for the permanent security of the property in the hands of its original owners is found in the fact that it can never be mortgaged.

The college graduated two students at the end of the first four years. The number of students in attendance for the past year, in all its departments, was two hundred and three. The college is far removed from any other institution of the Church, and has a broad field from which to derive its students. It has felt, like all our other schools, the prevailing monetary stringency, but its friends are hopeful, and with an improved financial condition of the country it will greatly enlarge its usefulness.

## XII. SHENANDOAH INSTITUTE.

In the Virginia Conference there was felt for a number of years the need of a school, not aspiring to the proportions of a college, but an institution of more modest pretensions, such as might meet the local requirements of the people within the bounds of that conference. Such a school was founded at the first by private enterprise, in 1876, just a little over twenty years ago. In 1884 it passed under the direct care and control of the conference. The location for the school was chosen at Dayton, in Rockingham County, in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley, and it was appropriately named for this far-famed valley—Shenandoah Institute. Suitable buildings were erected, and in the autumn of 1876 the school was opened to receive students. Rev. J. N. Fries, A.M., was its first principal, with the following associate teachers: Rev. A. P. Funkhouser, William Funk, Miss Anna Baer, and Miss Ida Funkhouser. The buildings, now three in number, two of brick and one a frame, are two stories in height, and contain together thirty-three rooms. The grounds comprise about two acres. The whole property, with its appurtenances, is valued at about ten thousand dollars.

The range of study includes classical, scientific, English, and commercial courses, with medicine, music, and art. The faculty at the present time embraces, for all the departments, eight members. The following persons have served in the office of principal: Rev. J. N. Fries, A.M., 1876-78 and 1883-87; Rev. A. P. Funkhouser, 1878-81; Rev. W. J. Zuck, 1881-82; Rev. T. H. Son-nedecker, 1882-83; Rev. George P. Hott, A.M., 1887-96; Rev. E. U. Hoenshel, 1896 to the present. The annual attendance of students approaches one hundred. The graduates up to the present, in the regular academic depart-

ments, number fifty-one. Thus the school, while not claiming a more exalted rank than its name implies, succeeds in accomplishing a large amount of good, and has proved a real blessing to many of the young people of our Church in Virginia who would not otherwise have gained the advantages of a higher education.

### XIII. EDWARDS ACADEMY.

Edwards Academy, founded in 1877, was located originally at Greenville, Tennessee. Four years later the location was changed to White Pine, in the same State. The school was named for Bishop Edwards, who took much interest in the Tennessee Mission Conference. The first principal was S. C. Hanson, who served four years, or until the removal to White Pine. The next principal was Rev. Lewis Bookwalter, the present head of Western College, in Iowa. He served but a single year, when he returned to the North. David W. Doran served five years, from 1882 to 1887. The inability of the Tennessee Conference, on account of the smallness of its membership, to properly support it, left to the academy but a precarious life, and frequent changes in the teaching force continued. The recent development of the work in Tennessee, by which large accessions have been made to the Church, has placed the academy in a greatly improved relation. Last year, 1895-96, there was an attendance of about one hundred and fifty students; this number has now advanced to over two hundred. With so large an increase the accommodations are quite insufficient for the present need. Rev. J. D. Droke, A.M., who has recently assumed the duties of principal, begins his work greatly encouraged with the outlook so far as students are concerned. The academy has five teachers: Professor Droke, principal and teacher of the ancient languages and sciences; E. S.

Vaught, English and mathematics; Mrs. N. E. Gass, primary department. Other departments, as commercial and music, are also represented. Apparently the academy, while retaining its more modest name, is fairly on the way toward attaining the proportions of a respectable college.

#### XIV. ERIE CONFERENCE SEMINARY.

The institution bearing this name is beautifully located in the town of Sugar Grove, in Warren County, Pennsylvania, well toward the northwestern corner of the State. It was opened for the admission of students on September 1, 1884. Its situation is within the bounds of the Erie Conference, and this conference alone is directly interested in its support. The purpose of the founding was to provide in the nearer home field educational conveniences for the young people especially within the bounds of that conference and in that section of the State, as also in the adjacent territory of western New York.

The seminary building is a structure of good size, being ninety by sixty feet in extent, and three stories in height. It is built of brick, trimmed with stone, and has nineteen rooms, including a well-furnished chapel. The ground is a handsome plat of four acres. The surroundings of the town and seminary are picturesque and attractive. The property is valued at about twenty-two thousand dollars, and the institution is practically without debt.

The school began its career with a faculty of six instructors, Rev. R. J. White, A.M., being principal. His associates in the work, in the various departments, were W. W. Prugh, S. C. Hayden, Miss Alice Dickson, E. H. Hill, and Mrs. R. J. White. Professor White has remained at the head of the institution continuously to the present. The school now has seven persons in its faculty. The departments of study provided are college preparatory,



normal, scientific, music, and so on. The aim is to do thorough work in everything that is undertaken, but no pretense is made of doing the broader work of a college, no promises being held out which the school is not prepared to meet.

The seminary is as yet without an endowment, and consequently not self-supporting. The annual deficiency, however, is made good by its principal founder, so that no accumulating debt is permitted to burden the institution. Professor White, as the principal of this school, has shown most commendable skill, not only in giving direction to the department of instruction, but in the control of its finances as well. By a wise and economical management he has preserved the school from the embarrassments which have proved so heavy an incubus upon most educational institutions.

The school since its founding has graduated ninety young men and women. When to these are added the hundreds who have received instruction in its classes without going on to graduation, it will be seen that in the thirteen years of its existence it has accomplished a noble service for the Church.

#### XV. OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

Besides the institutions named in the preceding pages, efforts have been made, at various times, and in different States, to build up others. They were organized under various names, as colleges, seminaries, academies, and institutes, but, with the exception of one or two, have ceased to exist. Some of them were absorbed by other and larger institutions, some were transferred to other locations and reorganized under other names, and others closed because of insufficient financial support. All of them served a useful purpose for a time, and several were

continued for a considerable number of years. A few of them were chiefly under private control, with conference recognition. All of them deserve mention here, as indicating the interest of the people in the conferences where they were located in the work of building up the Church by every proper means, and the sacrifices they were ready to make for this end. The institutions referred to are as follows:

Roanoke Seminary, at Roanoke, Indiana; Green Hill Seminary, at Green Hill, Indiana; Fostoria Academy, at Fostoria, Ohio; Elroy Institute, at Elroy, Wisconsin; Dover Academy, at Dover, Illinois; Ontario Academy, in Ontario, Dominion of Canada; Washington Seminary, at Huntsville, State of Washington; Sublimity College, Oregon; Central College, Kansas; Gould College, at Harlan, Kansas, merged into Lecompton; Gibbon Institute, at Gibbon, Nebraska, moved to York and reorganized as York College; North Manchester College, North Manchester, Indiana.

The Rufus Clark and Wife Training School in Africa has been described on page 445.

## CHAPTER VI

### UNION BIBLICAL SEMINARY

#### I. THE FOUNDING.

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that the successors of Otterbein, a man of broad and generous learning, should have been for a series of years averse to trusting the ministry with a liberal education. It was not until nearly a third of a century after the death of Otterbein that the first movement was made toward establishing an institution of learning for the Church, and then twenty-four more years passed before steps were taken toward the founding of a theological seminary. Meanwhile, some of the more wakeful young men sought for an education elsewhere, and when United Brethren colleges began to be built a considerable number of the graduates who were candidates for the ministry sought for a theological education in the institutions of other churches. And thus the Church, through neglect to provide the means of theological training, sustained material loss, since there was a constant temptation to young men educated in the schools of other denominations to form permanent attachments elsewhere than in the old home.

The General Conference of 1865 took action recommending special biblical studies in the colleges, but no speaker on the floor of that Conference even suggested that any further step be taken. In the General Conference of 1869, at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, the Committee on Education presented in their report the following resolution :

That we recommend to those having the care of our institutions of learning the propriety of increasing the facilities for biblical instruction, especially for the benefit of young men preparing for the ministry.

This proposition was opposed by Rev. H. Garst and Rev. W. J. Shuey, of the Miami Conference, on the ground that if adopted it would defeat itself. Mr. Garst held that under this recommendation every college in the Church would soon be attempting to give theological instruction, and that failure must necessarily follow. He expressed himself in favor of concentration, and that the conference might "give its voice in favor of one or two thorough biblical institutions." Mr. Shuey followed with a strong speech urging that the time had fully come for the Church to take an advance step, and proceed to build and equip one thorough theological seminary. He closed by moving to send back the resolution to the Committee on Education, with instructions to report to the conference a plan for the founding of such an institution, to be under the control and direction of the General Conference. In due time the committee laid before the conference the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That the Board of Education be instructed to devise and adopt a plan for the founding of a biblical institute, to be under the control of the General Conference; and said board is hereby instructed and empowered to take measures to raise funds and locate said institution, and to proceed with its establishment as soon as practicable.

The resolution was with great unanimity adopted.

The Board of Education appointed by this conference consisted of Revs. Lewis Davis, D.D., Daniel Shuck, W. C. Smith, M. Wright, E. B. Kephart, D. Eberly, S. Weaver, P. B. Lee, W. S. Titus, and E. Light. At a meeting of this board, held on July 27, 1870, in Dayton, Ohio, it was determined to proceed with the work of founding a



theological seminary, as directed by the General Conference; also, that the seminary be located at the city of Dayton. It was also decided that the institution should be named Union Biblical Seminary. It is a fact well remembered that the name "Biblical" was chosen rather than "Theological," in deference to the prejudice which still existed in some quarters against a "theological" education, or against "preacher factories," as some were pleased to call theological seminaries. The prefix "Union" was adopted as expressing the fact that the Church throughout all its conferences was expected to unite its interest in this one theological seminary. It was further determined at this session of the board to make an appeal to the Church for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars for the founding of the school. In choosing the location the board was influenced by the belief at that time that Dayton presented, all things considered, the greatest number of advantages. The reader will notice that no resident of Dayton, or of the Miami Conference, was a member of the board, and that only one of the number resided in the State of Ohio.

The board met in a second session, again at Dayton, on August 2, 1871. It was decided at this meeting that a beginning of work be made in the ensuing month of October. Two professors were elected at this meeting, leaving further exigencies to be provided for. Rev. Lewis Davis, D.D., president of Otterbein University, Rev. George A. Funkhouser, A.B., a graduate of Otterbein, and more recently of Western Theological Seminary, at Allegheny, Pennsylvania, were the men elected. An executive committee was also appointed, consisting of Bishop J. J. Glossbrenner, Dr. L. Davis, and Revs. W. J. Shuey, John Kemp, D. K. Flickinger, D. Berger, and Milton Wright. The committee soon afterward arranged with Rev. J. P. Landis,

A.B., who had just been appointed pastor of the Summit Street Church, to do some work in the seminary. In the division of the work Dr. Davis took the department of systematic and pastoral theology, Professor Funkhouser Greek exegesis and biblical and church history, and Mr. Landis, who did not then hold in the full sense the rank of a professor, taught the Hebrew language and homiletics. Bishops Glossbrenner, Weaver, Edwards, and Dickson were chosen as a "board of supervision." The day for opening as set by the Board of Education was the 11th of October, and on this day eleven persons presented themselves as students.

## II. GRADUATES.

Three years after the opening eight persons were graduated. From the opening to the present writing, January, 1897, there have been in attendance at the seminary upward of four hundred students. Two hundred and four of this number have graduated. Of the graduates one hundred and sixty-one are in the Christian ministry, three are foreign missionaries, ten are teachers, twenty are in other professions, ten have died. Nine others, six of them graduates, have been in the foreign field as missionaries. Two of the graduates are presidents of colleges, two are professors in the seminary, four are professors in colleges, one is associate editor of the *Religious Telescope*, one is editor of the *Quarterly Review*, one is editor of the *Watchword*, six are presiding elders, while many others are filling some of the most important pulpits of the Church. The work of the graduates of the seminary is making itself widely felt in the increased intelligence, enterprise, and activity of the denomination, as also in the higher standard of qualification for the pulpit which is gradually being demanded by the people.

## III. ADMISSION OF WOMEN.

It is a noteworthy fact, which history should record, that in the schedule of rules adopted at the first for the government of the seminary there was one which provided for the admission of women on the same conditions as men to all the privileges of the seminary. The measure was opposed by some who were reluctant to see the seminary taking an anomalous position among institutions of its kind, and who held to a modern application of the words, "But I suffer not a woman to teach." But the wisdom of the provision was vindicated when, some years later, young women expecting to become missionaries to the foreign field, or workers at home, came knocking at the doors of the institution. In many cases wives of students have entered the seminary, taking more or less work along with their husbands. Since the founding of the school thirty-two women have been admitted to study, and eleven have regularly graduated. The results of the experiment have been so satisfactory that the question of admitting women to the full privilege of the seminary courses has ceased to be an open one.

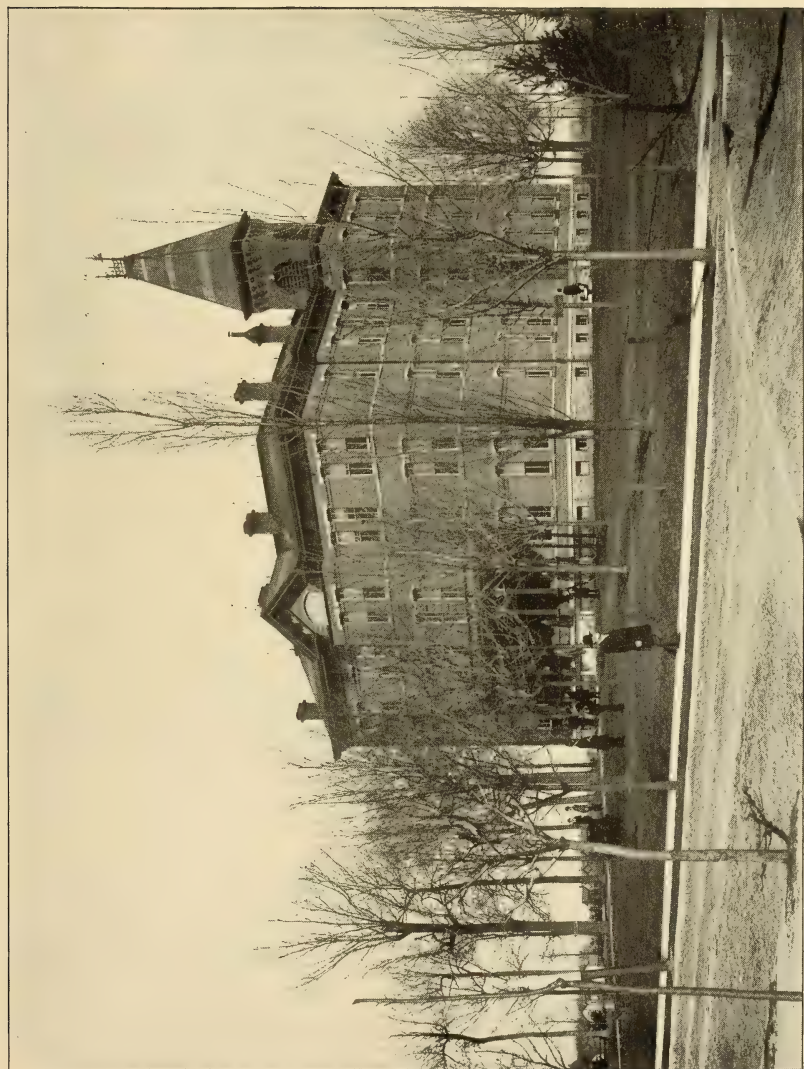
## IV. THE FACULTY.

Dr. L. Davis continued at the head of the faculty until 1886, a period of fifteen years, when on account of age he was relieved of the duties of a regular chair, and was elected *emeritus* professor and lecturer, which position he retained until his death in March, 1890. Dr. Funkhouser, on the retirement of Dr. Davis, was elected senior professor, which relation he still sustains. In 1874 Rev. R. Wahl, a scholarly German, who had been for some time connected with Drew Theological Seminary, was elected to the chair of Hebrew exegesis and church history. He served one year. In 1875 Rev. George Keister, A.B.,

a graduate of Otterbein University and of the School of Theology in Boston University, was elected to the chair of Hebrew exegesis and biblical history. In May, 1880, Professor Keister was elected to the chair of church history, and Rev. J. P. Landis, A.M., a graduate of Otterbein University and of Lane Theological Seminary, to the chair of Hebrew exegesis and pastoral theology. Professor Keister died suddenly in August, 1880. Rev. A. W. Drury, a graduate of Western College and of Union Biblical Seminary, was then elected to the chair of church history. In May, 1890, J. W. Etter, D.D., a graduate of Lebanon Valley College and of Drew Theological Seminary, and at the time editor of the *United Brethren Quarterly Review*, was elected to the chair of systematic theology. Two years later, on account of failing health, he resigned this position. His death occurred in March, 1895. In May, 1893, Rev. S. D. Faust, A.M., a graduate of Lebanon Valley College and of Union Biblical Seminary, was elected to the then vacant chair of church history. The faculty now stands: George A. Funkhouser, D.D., LL.D., senior professor, with the chair of Greek exegesis and homiletics; J. P. Landis, D.D., Ph.D., professor of Old Testament theology and exegesis; A. W. Drury, D.D., professor of systematic theology; S. D. Faust, D.D., professor of church history; Wilbur C. Kennedy, B.S., professor of elocution and oratory.

The fewness of the changes which have occurred in the faculty in the quarter of a century of the seminary's existence indicates alike the conservative policy which has governed the management of the institution and the satisfactory character of the work done. Only nine men have been professors from the beginning, three of whom are deceased.





UNION BIBLICAL SEMINARY.



JOHN KEMP.

## V. BUILDING AND FINANCES.

For a period of eight years the seminary was without a building, the rooms of the Summit Street Church being used for recitation purposes. In the summer of 1879 the present building was erected, at a cost of about twelve thousand dollars. The handsome grounds connected with the seminary, comprising a tract of about four acres, were the generous gift of the late Rev. John Kemp. The land, lying within the city, and valued at that time at ten thousand dollars, is now surrounded with houses, and is at the present time worth several times the above amount. Mr. Kemp was one of the warmest friends of the seminary, and was for several years its financial manager.

During the years in which the seminary was without a building and without endowment, the current expenses were provided for by annual contributions from its friends. These gifts, however, were insufficient for the purpose, and a heavy debt was in time accumulated. This has recently been fully provided for by the raising of a fund of sixty thousand dollars. The endowment of the institution, in money paid in and secured notes, has reached the gratifying figure of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. The seminary property, including the grounds, is valued at forty-one thousand dollars, the library at three thousand dollars.

The financial managers of the institution have been Rev. John Kemp, Rev. S. M. Hippard, W. J. Pruner, D.D., Mr. S. L. Herr, and D. R. Miller, D.D. All these men performed good service for the seminary, but it is no injustice to any of them to say that Dr. Miller has excelled. His term of service began in 1885. His last achievement is that of raising, through persistent and wisely directed effort, the "silver anniversary" fund of sixty thousand dollars. The amount was exceeded by one thousand dollars.

The seminary, small in its beginnings, has gradually risen to a position of honor. The work it has done has already proved a blessing above estimate to the Church, and it starts upon its second quarter of a century with rich opportunity for future success. Its needs are keeping pace with its growth, and doubtless the Lord will raise up friends for it to further provide for all exigencies, and so augment its power for good.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE General Conference of 1869, which took the initiatory steps toward founding a theological seminary, gave further proof of its progressive spirit by creating for the Church a general Board of Education. The need of a central advisory board which should have a general oversight over the educational work, began to be emphasized by several considerations, among them that of the tendency toward a too rapid multiplication of colleges. The reader has already seen that when once the educational wave was started it swept with great force through the Church. Under this impulse more colleges were in process of forming than the church membership justified, or than could possibly be financially supported, and it required no profound foresight to perceive that unless the movement could be placed under restraint not many years would pass before the Church would have a number of deeply embarrassed colleges.

But a further purpose in the organization of the Board of Education was to secure homogeneity in the work of the several colleges of the Church. It was apparent that institutions geographically widely separated would soon differ widely in character unless some common bond of union to hold them in closer relation to each other could be devised. It was also provided that reports on the condition of the various colleges and other educational institutions of the Church should be made quadrennially to the General Conference, with such recommendations as

the board might see proper to offer. It was not deemed necessary to place extended financial responsibility with the board, since the boards of trustees of the various institutions have control of the department of finance for their schools respectively. The board is instructed, however, to provide and manage a loan fund for the benefit of students needing aid in pursuing their course in college or the theological seminary. The board consists of twelve members, six of whom are required by the Discipline to be ministers, and six of whom may be laymen.

The service of the board in unifying and promoting the general educational work of the Church has attained a greater value than is generally perceived. Some of the quadrennial reports to the General Conference have been extended discussions of the general field of higher education, and ought to have a wide reading among the people of the Church. The board holds its meetings annually.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK

#### I. A VIEW OF THE EARLIER WORK.

It will probably remain always impossible to determine when the first distinctively United Brethren Sunday school was organized. Most of the early Sunday schools in America, and in England as well, were not conducted under denominational auspices. The American Sunday-School Union, organized in 1824, consisting of representatives of various denominations, was for many years the dominating organized agency in the American Sunday-school work, and under its influence, and by the direct activities of its Sunday-school missionaries, the early schools of the country were widely conducted on the union plan. The union is still a strong organization, and is performing a large work in the Sunday-school field, but with the later rapid growth of the denominational agencies the place of the union holds a diminished relation. The earliest Sunday-school union formed in America was organized in Philadelphia in 1791, under the name of "First-Day or Sunday-School Society." The date of its organization was twelve years before the first Sunday school was organized in the city of New York. The New York Sunday-School Union was organized in 1816, and the Massachusetts Sunday-School Union in 1825. Several other unions were organized, generally of a local character. In Great Britain, the early home of the modern Sunday school, the London Sunday-School Society was organ-

ized in September, 1795, under the management of an equal number of Churchmen and Dissenters. This was succeeded in July, 1803, by the London Sunday-School Union, which continues to hold in the work in England the relatively prominent position once held by the American Sunday-School Union in the United States. In distinctively denominational work the Methodist Episcopal Church was early in the field in the United States, its Sunday-school union having been organized in 1827. The Congregational Church followed in 1832. The admirable Sunday-school organization of the United Brethren Church, which has done so much to quicken interest and activity in the Sunday-school work, was deferred to a time over thirty years after the later one of these dates, but the distinct denominational schools were everywhere familiar long before. The Church in its earlier years, as has been seen in these pages, was disinclined to gather up statistics, and even records were often not carefully preserved.

To say that Sunday schools were to any considerable extent organized from early dates, would be to assume what was not generally true among the Christian denominations. But there are evidences that religious education of the children received early attention, and the Sunday schools seem to have sprung up as they did among the people of other churches. Mr. Otterbein, in his own church in Baltimore, seems to have preserved the methods familiar to him earlier in the Reformed Church. In the schedule of rules drawn up by him in 1785 for the government of the pastors and people of that church he placed this among the duties of the pastors: "The preacher shall make it one of his highest duties to watch over the rising youth, diligently instructing them in the principles of religion, according to the Word of God. He should catechise them once a week; and the more mature



in years, who have obtained a knowledge of the great truths of the gospel, should be impressed with the importance of striving, through divine grace, to become worthy recipients of the holy sacrament. And, in view of church membership, such as manifest a desire to this end should be thoroughly instructed for a time, be examined in the presence of their parents and the vestry, and, if approved, after the preparation sermon, they should be presented before the church and admitted." Dr. Drury, who has made a very careful study of Otterbein's life and times, in speaking of Mr. Otterbein's frequent visits to different places in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, says that "even before 1800 he established Sunday schools and prayer-meetings in connection with these extended labors."<sup>1</sup> There is little probability that these Sunday schools possessed to any marked degree the characteristics of the Sunday school of the present time. But this remark would apply equally to the Robert Raikes and many other schools of that period. The object seems to have been definite religious teaching for the young, without organization into classes, the ministers or teachers using such skill in the work as they possessed. About this same time J. G. Pfrimmer was engaged in similar work of teaching the children, as is indicated in an entry in *Newcomer's Journal*, dated May 21, 1800. "To-day," he says, "I came to Brother Pfrimmer's. About thirty children had assembled at his house, to whom he was giving religious instruction. Some were under conviction. I also spoke to them. Their hearts were sensibly touched. May the Lord convert them truly."<sup>2</sup>

There is no evidence now available that these schools continued through to the period when the more modern form of the Sunday school became common. But there are

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Otterbein*, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> *Newcomer's Journal*, p. 67.

evidences that some schools of a later type were established at early dates. One of these was organized in Otterbein's church in Baltimore. Of this Col. Robert Cowden, general Sunday-school secretary for the United Brethren Church, in an article in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1893, says: "The first United Brethren Sunday school in Baltimore was established in the old Otterbein Church in 1827. Rev. William Numsen, a man prominent in business as in religious circles in Baltimore, the last known charter member of that school, then a pupil, but afterward for many years superintendent, died but recently at the age of ninety years. From his lips Brother Jacob Knipp, of Baltimore, a later member of the same school, obtained many very interesting facts about the original organization of that school, which he gave to the readers of the *Telescope* a few years ago." Another school, preceding by several years that in Baltimore, was organized in a United Brethren church near Corydon, Indiana, its date being 1820.

The General Conference of 1837 was the first to take official recognition of the duty of the ministry to instruct the children in the knowledge of Christ. The clause enforcing this duty is a very earnest expression, but Sunday schools as such are not mentioned. The same is true of the succeeding General Conferences up to 1849. In the Book of Discipline as revised by this conference there is a distinct and strong utterance. The conference said:

WHEREAS, The Sabbath-school institution is in every way worthy of our highest regard and untiring efforts to promote as a branch of the Christian church; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we labor to have Sabbath schools organized throughout the Church.

*Resolved*, That all our ministers, both itinerant and otherwise, do all consistently in their power to organize Sabbath schools in our societies wherever practicable.

*Resolved*, That our Printing Establishment furnish the Church, as soon as practicable, with books of suitable character for Sabbath schools.

This was an expression so vigorous and direct as to seem in tone quite modern. The conference of 1853, however, went quite beyond this, and placed upon the ministers about every duty that is now laid down. It required that they preach each year at each appointment a sermon on the importance of the Sunday-school work, that they use all proper means to organize schools and collect funds for the purchase of libraries, and collect and report to the annual conference full statistics pertaining to the schools. All this meant indeed a very effective organization of the work. A further step in 1857 was to connect the Sunday schools of the Church with the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society, and to provide for weekly collections for the society.

## II. A GENERAL ORGANIZATION.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the General Conference in taking official action relating to this department of work, the work itself was going right on. Many of the ministers and teachers were interested, and schools were being organized and instruction was being conducted after the methods of that time. But the time for advanced action came at last. In May, 1865, Rev. Isaac Crouse, of the Sandusky Annual Conference, presented to the General Conference, at Western, Iowa, a carefully laid plan for a general organization of the Sunday-school work of the Church. The organization was called the "Sabbath-School Association of the United Brethren Church." The constitution and rules, or by-laws, as arranged by Mr. Crouse, provided for a general superintendent, a secretary, a treasurer, and a publication committee, and included plans for

raising funds for book publication purposes and for assisting needy schools, and for organizing distinctively United Brethren schools. The whole paper was adopted, with scarcely a suggestion of amendment, and Mr. Crouse was himself immediately chosen to the office of general secretary. Rev. W. J. Shuey was elected general superintendent, and Mr. J. B. King treasurer. The latter, resigning soon afterward, was succeeded by Rev. Solomon Vonnieda. Each of these men continued in office twelve years. In 1869, after an experience of four years, the constitution of the association was materially changed, since which time it has remained substantially the same.

This forward step grew rapidly in favor with the people, and after a few years funds came liberally into the treasury. One-fourth of these, under the earlier provisions of the constitution, might be devoted to book publication, and in 1874 this work was begun. The Pioneer Library, consisting of ten volumes, was first issued, and further work was undertaken; but the sales not being sufficient to justify publication, this feature of the work was discontinued. Three-fourths of the money thus contributed was appropriated for Sunday-school supplies for needy schools.

The Chautauqua Assembly movement, organized in 1874, which at first contemplated the better equipment of Sunday-school teachers for their work, attracted from the beginning the favorable attention of teachers in the United Brethren Church, and some of them received their diplomas with the first classes graduating from its department of normal instruction. In 1886 the Sunday-School Board, believing that a larger number of our teachers could be enlisted through a denominational organization, formed the Bible Normal Union. The board was not mistaken in this. The number taking the courses of lessons was greatly increased. The courses were substantially



the same, and by arrangement with the Chautauqua authorities teachers completing the Bible Normal Union course were entitled to receive the Chautauqua normal diploma, as well as the handsome diploma awarded by our own board.

From 1877 Col. Robert Cowden, who had been elected by the General Conference as general secretary, was employed by the board to give all his time to the Sunday-school work. Much attention was given by him to holding Sunday-school institutes, assisting in Sunday-school conventions, and delivering addresses on various phases of the work. These labors, extended widely through the Church, proved highly useful in helping to stimulate teachers to higher ambitions in seeking for better qualifications and for larger results from their work. Several assemblies on a larger scale were attempted, but these proving financially unsuccessful, efforts in that direction were abandoned.

In 1881 a Home Reading Circle was organized, upon the general plan of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle. This was done in the belief that success would attend it similar to that reached by the Bible Normal Union. This hope was disappointed, and, after six years of trial, it was abandoned, and our people were counseled to coöperate with the Chautauqua Reading Circle.

A better experiment was tried when it was decided, in 1890, to offer questions on the International lessons. The arrangement has met with wide favor, and the results are highly satisfactory to those who have taken the examinations.

The Home Department for the study of the Sunday-school lessons has received favorable attention among our people, and numerous successful classes have been

organized. Considerable numbers of persons who cannot attend the schools are thus brought into living touch with them, and receive many of the benefits the school itself bestows.

The publication of Sunday-school literature, such as lesson helps, song-books, and other supplies, does not come under the direction of the Sunday-School Board, but has from the first been a part of the business of the general Publishing House. These forms of literature, already spoken of in these pages, have uniformly met with hearty acceptance by the people of our Sunday schools and Church, as well as among people of other denominations, their circulation being larger than our schools could use. They are prepared in the English and German languages.

The United Brethren Church has kept in close touch with the great union movements of the Sunday-school world. When the International Lesson system was inaugurated in June, 1872, to begin its first lesson course with January, 1873, our Publishing House began at once the preparation for it, and issued its first lessons with the beginning of the course. Our Church has had a representative on the International Lesson Committee since 1884, Bishop Kephart being the representative since June, 1896. Colonel Cowden, our Sunday-school secretary, was for fifteen years a member of the International Executive Committee.

The activity of our people in the Sunday school is perhaps fairly indicated by the annual statistics. In the Year-book for 1897, the statistics for 1896 show an enrollment of officers, teachers, and scholars, of 290,861. The membership of the Church as reported for the same year is 238,782, the Sunday-school enrollment being in excess 52,079.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN UNION

#### I. ORGANIZATION.

THE nineteenth century has become noted for its production and development of the great organized agencies which have given such vast impulse to the advance of Christianity. Among these are the great Bible societies, American and foreign, the numerous home and foreign missionary societies, American and European, the phenomenal expansion of the Sunday-school work, the founding of great Christian publishing houses, denominational and undenominational, the building up of distinctively Christian institutions of learning, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Woman's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and the National and the International Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Some of these agencies lap over a little way into the preceding century, but their great development belongs to the century now nearing its close. In these respects the activities of the Christian church have fully kept pace with the expansion in other fields of progress, as in discovery, invention, and the application of scientific principles to the various industries.

It was reserved for the latter part of the century to give birth and development to one of the most remarkable of all the Christian agencies, known by the comprehensive name, "the young people's movement." This movement sprang up here and there in sporadic organizations, with-

out connection with organizations of a like kind. Among these was one formed as early as 1867, in Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler's church in Brooklyn, called a "Young People's Association," and embodying some of the principal features now pertaining to the movement. Only a little later, in the year 1871, a similar organization was formed in the First United Brethren Church, in Dayton, Ohio. This was at first an association for young men only, but a few years later it was broadened in its character so as to embrace also young women. The organization thus founded became the pioneer of many similar organizations throughout the Church. In various other churches organizations of a like kind were formed.

As the years passed, the time came when these numerous societies and others in process of forming were to be gathered together into a great national organization, as the Sunday schools of the nation and of the world have found a common bond in the international movement. For this end the Lord was pleased to raise up Dr. Francis E. Clark, of Portland, Maine. He organized in his church a society of young people, without any thought at the first that the work in his local congregation should presently become the means of giving an impetus to a movement that should become so vast in its extent. This local organization was called the "Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor." It has several special characteristics. Its aim was distinctly Christian. It required a pledge of definite service. It appointed stated meetings for consecration, and it divided its work among special committees. An account of the society appeared in a religious newspaper, and through this other churches were led to adopt the same plan. Thus in a short time the societies multiplied among the different denominations, and these were afterward gathered together under a common bond, and known



by the name at first given to the society in Dr. Clark's church. Dr. Clark was chosen as president of the united movement, and probably no wiser choice could have been made.

But meanwhile there were those in the various denominations who were persuaded that their young people could be best instructed, and their denominational loyalty best preserved, by the organization of unions under their own care and direction. And among several of the great denominations such unions have been formed, as the Epworth League of the Methodist churches, the Baptist Young People's Christian Union, and so on. In the United Brethren Church the local societies were at first gathered under conference direction. In the Allegheny Conference, for example, representatives of a number of societies organized a Young People's Christian Association, in 1887, which in the following year became a conference organization. In 1889 a similar organization was effected in the East Pennsylvania Conference, and in the same year the Miami Conference Young People's Christian Union was organized. All of these were organized substantially upon the plan which was soon after adopted for the whole Church.

The United Brethren Ministerial Association of Dayton, Ohio, in its monthly meeting in April, 1890, had for a topic, "Should We Have a General Organization of the Young People's Societies in Our Church?" It was formally discussed by Prof. J. P. Landis, D.D., and M. R. Drury, D.D. Dr. Drury read a carefully prepared paper on the subject, in which he recommended the organization of the young people of the denomination. The association appointed Revs. M. R. Drury, J. P. Landis, and W. A. Dickson a committee to secure the indorsement of the bishops and to issue a call for a convention. The call, after reciting

the belief that the time had come for holding a convention of representatives and friends of the young people's societies throughout the United Brethren Church to organize a young people's Christian society for the denomination in harmony with its spirit and methods of work, and that the holding of a convention, affording opportunities for the cultivation of a closer feeling of sympathy among the young people, would awaken a broader Christian enthusiasm, invited "all young people's societies in the Church, of whatever kind, to send delegates to a general convention to be held in Dayton, Ohio, June 4 and 5, 1890, in the First United Brethren Church." All churches friendly to the movement were also asked to elect and send representatives to the convention.

The convention met as called, and was attended by about two hundred delegates, representing societies and churches in nine different States and fourteen annual conferences. Representatives of every department of church work were present to give approval, and the convention was characterized by genuine enthusiasm. Prof. J. P. Landis was chosen temporary chairman, and Mr. E. W. Runkle temporary secretary.

The representatives who constituted the convention were unanimous in their opinion that there should be a general union of the young people's societies of the denomination, but they were divided as to what should be the name and character of the local society. Some favored the adoption of the Christian Endeavor society as the only form for local organizations, while others advocated a distinct denominational plan and name. After much discussion, the Committee on Plan of Organization, consisting of Mr. E. L. Shuey, Rev. H. F. Shupe, Rev. L. B. Hix, Mr. W. O. Appenzellar, Rev. E. S. Lorenz, Rev. W. O. Fries, and Mr. L. A. Buchner, was appointed. This committee reported the name

and plan of the "Young People's Christian Union." In keeping with the name and spirit of the United Brethren in Christ, mutual concessions of opinions were made, and the plan adopted left to the local church the choice of the form and name for the local societies. This was unanimously adopted with rejoicing, and the whole plan was received by the Church with unanimity and enthusiasm.

The constitution provides for a general union of all Christian young people's societies in the United Brethren Church to be under the direction of general officers and an executive council. The object of the union is "to unite the young people's Christian societies of the entire Church, of whatever name, for mutual helpfulness, for stimulating church loyalty and an intelligent interest in the various church enterprises, and for the organization and extension of the young people's Christian societies within the Church." An organization of similar character called a branch union is provided for each annual conference. Conventions of the general union are held biennially, and of the branch unions, annually.

The officers of the union elected at the time of its organization were: President, Dr. J. P. Landis; vice-presidents (one for each bishop's district), W. O. Appenzellar, Rev. W. O. Fries, Rev. L. B. Hix, Rev. M. R. Meyer, Prof. J. A. Sollinger; corresponding secretary, Rev. W. A. Dickson; recording secretary, Prof. U. D. Runkle; treasurer, Mrs. R. L. Swain; executive committee, Prof. J. P. Landis, Rev. W. A. Dickson, E. L. Shuey, Rev. H. F. Shupe, and Rev. A. E. Davis.

The executive committee arranged with the editors of the *Religious Telescope* to have a department devoted to the Young People's Christian Union, and Dr. M. R. Drury was elected editor. Topics for the young people's prayer-meetings and a badge were provided, and

leaflets were issued. Societies were at once organized throughout the Church, and at the annual conferences succeeding the convention a number of branch unions were organized. The first report of the corresponding secretary, January 1, 1891, showed eighty-seven societies enrolled and nine branch unions.

## II. PROGRESS AND WORK.

Early in 1892 the executive committee asked the societies to make an offering for the missionary work, and in conjunction with the missionary board selected Los Angeles, California, as the place for establishing a church. It also designated the last Sunday in May of that year as an anniversary day, or young people's day, to be observed with special services and an offering for the Los Angeles mission. At that anniversary the corresponding secretary reported two hundred and ninety-five societies. Sixteen branch unions had been organized, some of which had held branch conventions.

The second general convention was held at Galion, Ohio, June 1 and 2, 1892. It was attended by about two hundred delegates, representing eight States and seventeen conferences. The number of societies reported was 448, with about 22,500 members. Twenty branch unions had been organized. The treasurer reported \$1,359.45 received, of which \$806.36 was for the Los Angeles fund. At this convention a few verbal changes in the constitution were made.

When the General Conference of 1893 met, the union numbered 559 societies, with 23,193 members, and a memorial was presented, asking recognition as a department of the Church. The need of a young people's paper to be the organ of the union was also felt, and the General Conference was memorialized to provide it. Both requests



were granted. The Young People's Christian Union was made a department of the Church by giving it a place in the Discipline and by constituting the president of the local young people's society a member of the quarterly conference. The publication of a paper was authorized to "represent specifically the work of the Young People's Christian Union," and Rev. H. F. Shupe was elected editor. The paper was named the *Young People's Watchword*, and the first number was issued September 2, 1893. The constitution was so changed as to make the executive committee consist of nine members, including the president and corresponding secretary, four of whom are elected by the General Conference. The General Conference elected Mrs. L. R. Keister, Rev. W. A. Dickson, Rev. M. R. Drury, and Miss Estelle Krohn. Immediately after the General Conference Rev. W. A. Dickson resigned as corresponding secretary, and the editor of the young people's paper was elected to that office.

The general convention of 1894 was held at Elkhart, Indiana, June 21-24. An attendance of eight hundred people from fifteen States and thirty-three conferences, including some of the leaders of the Church, made it the largest and most representative gathering ever held in the Church. At this convention thirty-three branch organizations were reported, and the number of societies was 1,062, including forty-nine Junior societies. The number of members was 48,615, including 2,099 Juniors. The receipts for the two preceding years were \$2,408.63. Of this amount \$1,994.54 was for the Los Angeles mission, \$278.23 having been given during a week of self-denial. The receipts from society dues was \$413.59. At this convention the Young People's Reading Course was adopted. This provides for the reading of a number of selected books and of special study course papers in the *Watchword*, on the completion

of which certificates are granted to the readers. The convention also pledged to raise the sum of five thousand dollars for building a church at Los Angeles. The fifth anniversary, in May, 1895, showed the continued growth of the union, there being 1,400 societies and 58,000 members.

The fourth general convention was held June 17-21, 1896, at Des Moines, Iowa. It was a great representative convocation—spiritual, missionary, educational, and churchly in spirit. The union had grown to 1,763 societies, including 186 Junior societies, and 70,374 members, including 6,433 Juniors. The branch unions numbered forty-five. During the two preceding years \$808.16 had been paid as dues and \$3,293.22 for Los Angeles. Among the new lines of work adopted were the Christian-stewardship idea and the college committees. The officers elected were: President, J. P. Landis; vice-presidents, W. L. Richardson, William Williamson, A. B. Statton, W. E. Schell, J. S. Pitman; corresponding secretary, H. F. Shupe; recording secretary, Lizzie Sheets; treasurer, Z. W. Barnard; executive council, E. L. Shuey, W. O. Fries, and George Miller.

The statistics of the union January 1, 1897, were: Societies, 1,612; Junior societies, 208; total, 1,820. Members, 64,872; Junior members, 8,119; total, 72,991.

Although less than seven years have passed since the organization of the union, its advantages have become so apparent that it meets with universal favor. As a means of assisting young people in entering into the proper activities of Christian life, the association is above estimate.

## CHAPTER X

### THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH

ONE of the more recent boards created by the General Conference is that of trustees in general for the property of the United Brethren Church as a whole. This board was formed by the conference of 1889. The intent and scope of the board are indicated in the paper adopted by the General Conference providing for its organization. This paper was a part of a general report from the Committee on Church Incorporation, of which Rev. D. R. Miller was chairman :

Your committee fails to find any statutory provision for the incorporation of the Church in its entirety ; but that legal recognition and protection of the General Conference and its property may be secured by the election and incorporation of a Board of Trustees for the conference. We therefore recommend :

That the General Conference elect for and in behalf of itself a Board of Trustees consisting of twelve persons, who shall hold their office for four years, or until their successors are elected, who are hereby authorized and directed to secure the needed articles of incorporation at the earliest moment after the adjournment of the conference.

This paper was approved by the General Conference, and the Board of Trustees as provided for was elected. One of the objects for which this board exists is to receive such money or other property as may come to the Church by bequest or otherwise, without definite provision as to the purpose contemplated by the donors, or the naming of the board of trustees or other persons to whose care the bequests are to be intrusted. The powers of the board do not in any way conflict with the rights and powers

of any other boards of the Church, either general or local. The board as elected by the conference of 1889 consisted of the following persons: Rev. D. R. Miller, B. F. Witt, Judge J. A. Shauck, Rev. William McKee, Rev. W. J. Shuey, Rev. B. F. Booth, Bishop N. Castle, Bishop J. Dickson, Bishop E. B. Kephart, Rev. J. L. Luttrell, John Dodds, and Bishop J. Weaver.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE desirableness of organizing a general Historical Society for the Church became apparent some years ago. A meeting for the purpose of considering the question of such an organization was called at Dayton, in May, 1885. After some discussion it was decided that such a society be formed, and a constitution for its government was adopted. A board of officers was then elected, as provided for in the constitution, and the society was ready to assume its place as an established fact. Bishop Kephart was elected president, and has remained in that office since.

Among the objects of the society is that of collecting and preserving papers, records, books, and other materials bearing on the history of the Church. Of these it has made a considerable accumulation. It has also gathered relics of interest to quite an extent. Among the latter are Otterbein's clock, table, and chairs; also specimens of his handwriting.

The library and museum of the society occupy a room in the Publishing House, at Dayton, and its most valuable records and manuscripts are stored in the fire-proof vaults of the House.

A valuable service is rendered to the Church in the stimulus which the society inspires in historical studies. One of the results attained in this field is the publication of the early Disciplines of the Church, from 1814 to 1841, with

strictly literal renderings into English of those which were originally in German. The work of translation was accomplished by Professor Drury, of the theological seminary. Action was also taken by the society toward producing, in conjunction with the Publishing House, similar translations of the early minutes of the conferences of the Church. The funds of the society have not thus far justified any very expensive work, but the beginning of a highly important department of work for the Church has been established. The society is under regular recognition by the General Conference and in the Book of Discipline, and quadrennial reports are required to be made to the General Conference. The meetings of the society are held annually, in May.

PART III  
THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES





# PART III

## THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES

### CHAPTER I

#### A GROUP OF EARLY CONFERENCES

##### I. THE ORIGINAL CONFERENCE.

THE reader has seen in these pages some account of the rise and growth of the old historic conference of the Church, from its initial meeting in Otterbein's parsonage, in 1789, up to the time of the first General Conference, in 1815. It has become customary to speak of this as the original conference, to distinguish it from other conferences, the body itself not having taken any other name than simply the Conference until after other conferences began to be formed, when its official name became the Hagerstown District or Conference. The reader will also remember that after two sessions, those of 1789 and 1791, no other formal assembling was held until the year 1800. From that time forward regular annual sessions were held, and these up to 1815 have been referred to. From the meager records of these sittings, as well as from other sources, we learn that their work was steadily extending, not only in the regions where it originated, but to the westward, especially in western Pennsylvania and into the new State of Ohio, which had just then been admitted to a place among the States of the Union. But from the brief memoranda left us enough is gathered to give us a strongly defined picture of the life and activities of those

times. Many of the names of the actors remain, and the work they succeeded in achieving stands out with great distinctness from a field over which the deepening mists of time have gathered. Brave and true men were they, toiling under many disadvantages, but laying with patience the foundations for the goodly temple which their successors have reared.

The time came by and by when, on account of the great extent of territory occupied, it became impracticable for all the ministers to meet in one assembly, and other conferences, daughters of this goodly conference of the East, must be formed. The first of these was organized at what was then a long distance from the meeting places of the old conference.

## II. THE MIAMI CONFERENCE.

The second conference of the United Brethren Church, formed in the year 1810, hardly so much by separation from the original conference as by semi-independent origin, was the Miami. Of the growth of the Church westward, leading to the formation of this conference, of the time and place of organization, and number of ministers present, with a list of their names, and of the several sessions leading up to the General Conference of 1815, mention has already been made.<sup>1</sup> Of its action in memorializing Bishop Otterbein to ordain one or more preachers, who might be able to ordain others also, and of its offices in bringing about the assembling of the first General Conference, mention has also been made. The conference began soon after its organization to assume a position of importance in the affairs of the Church. The original area embraced by the conference included all the State of Ohio, with the eastern portions of Indiana, the special

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 180, 184-186.

centers of work being in the Miami, Scioto, and Muskingum valleys.

The history of the conference presents a long list of names of men who toiled laboriously, in the earlier days and the later, and who contributed their proportion of noble achievement to what must perhaps, here as all over the Church, remain as a portion of its unrecorded history, except in the souls gathered into the kingdom of God. Six of its members, some of them while in previous connection in other conferences, have been honored by the General Conference with the responsibility of the bishop's office, of whom five, the elder and the younger Kumler, Zeller, Hoffman, and Coons, have been gathered into the eternal harvest. Others have been called to other responsible stations in the Church, as Shuey to the management of the Publishing House, Flickinger to the missionary secretaryship, Kemp, Billheimer, and McKee to the missionary treasury, Garst to Otterbein University, W. J. Pruner to Hartsville, Landis to the theological seminary, Beardshear and Bookwalter to the presidency of Western College, S. M. Hippard and C. W. Miller to the management of college finances. Others have attained noted success as pastors and presiding elders, as C. J. Burkert, J. L. Swain, and G. M. Mathews, the last adding to his work the care of the *Quarterly Review*. E. S. Lorenz, at one time president of Lebanon Valley College, is known throughout the Church, and more broadly beyond, as one of the foremost among Sunday-school music and song writers. Drs. W. H. Klinefelter and S. B. Ervin, former college presidents, are pastors in this conference. J. D. Holtzinger, the oldest living itinerant, waits in sweetness of spirit for the coming crown. Jacob Antrim, who sometimes gathered from three to four hundred souls into the Church in a single year, has long since gone to his reward. Rhinehart, the first editor of the *Religious Telescope*, and much noted

as a singer, earlier from Virginia and a member of the old conference, remained with the Miami till his death. John McNamar and the Bonebrakes, men of rugged strength, were among the early workers in this field. From everywhere the familiar faces look down to us out of the past, a numerous host, men who feared God, and toiled in the field until the going down of the sun.

Laymen, too, this conference has produced whose names are widely known. Among these was David L. Rike, who never thought the smallest meeting of the church too unimportant to attend, was a wise and safe counselor, serving long on many boards of the Church, was the stanchest and most lamented friend of Otterbein University, was sincere and unostentatious in his religious life, and large-hearted and generous in his benevolences. He has passed on to his coronation. John Dodds has long been widely known to the Church for his large-handed liberality, both in the city in which he has spent his life, and widely elsewhere, as many struggling church enterprises have experienced. Both these men were members of the General Conference of 1893, and Mr. Dodds is elected a delegate to that of 1897.

The conference has had good success in some of the cities and larger towns. Three thousand of its more than eleven thousand members are distributed among its ten churches in the city of Dayton. It has taken a place among the foremost in the advocacy of the progressive measures which have marked the life of the Church. In the long agitation on the anti-secret-society legislation it was among the most earnest in urging more liberal measures. It was among the first also to press the principle of *pro rata* representation in the General Conference, and in asking for lay delegation in the General and annual conferences. Generous from the beginning in



its support of Otterbein University, in contributing money and students alike, and equally so in its support of Union Biblical Seminary, its ministry and people have been greatly the gainers.

### III. THE MUSKINGUM CONFERENCE.

Many of the United Brethren families who emigrated westward found new homes in the Muskingum Valley, in sections contiguous to Westmoreland and other counties in Pennsylvania where the Church was already established. They remained under the care of the old conference in the East until the year 1818. The distance to the East, and the poverty of most of the ministers, prevented their attendance at the conference sessions. It was therefore resolved to form a second conference west of the mountains, and on the 1st of June, 1818, six ministers met at Joseph Naftzgar's, in Harrison County, Ohio, to effect an organization. Their names were Abraham Forney, Matthias Bortsfeld, Joseph Gundy, Christian Knagi (Kanaga), Jacob Winter, and John Crum. Bishops Newcomer and Zeller presided. Three visitors, J. G. Pfrimmer, Jacob Antrim, and J. A. Lehman, were present. A camp-meeting held near by, on the farm of Mr. Bortsfeld, had been closed just before the conference was opened. Bishop Newcomer, in referring to this meeting, expresses surprise at the great numbers of the people who were present, and says, "The grace of God wrought powerfully among the people." It was from this season of spiritual baptism that these ministers came when they gathered for this first conference. Their minutes breathe warmly the spirit of grace. "Brotherly love," say they, "united the hearts of the little band," and they "resolved to build the kingdom of Christ under the blessing of the Lord."

"It is a sublime spectacle," remarks Mr. Lawrence, "to behold these six German ministers, without patronage, with little education, and depending almost wholly on the products of their little farms in the woods for their subsistence, resolving to build the kingdom of Christ. And they did build, and God owned their work."

The Muskingum Conference as thus organized included all the territory lying east and north of the Muskingum River, and several counties in western Pennsylvania, among them Westmoreland and Washington counties, the region where Christian Berger and others had begun to preach as early as 1803. The work west of the Pennsylvania line was for a number of years conducted almost wholly by a consecrated local ministry, so slightly was the regular itinerancy yet organized in that day. Gradually a change came, and the conference in numbers and efficiency gained a high rank.

Regret has already been expressed that this noble conference, through later reorganization of boundary, lost its autonomy and name in the Church. It has, however, produced names that will live. Among the men whom it raised up are Bishop Weaver, Alexander Biddle, and others familiar to the General Conferences and the Church a generation ago. Of Mr. Biddle a word is to be spoken farther on.

#### IV. THE SCIOTO CONFERENCE.

The early history of the Scioto Conference is the same as that of the Miami. The Miami was organized within the territory which afterward became that of the Scioto, and up to 1824 the life of the two conferences was one. The region which fell to the Scioto was among the fairest of the State, and portions of it were at that time under more advanced cultivation than other portions of Ohio.

The territory was the central and southeastern parts of the State.

At the session of the Miami Conference in 1824 arrangements were made for the division, and the first separate session of the Scioto Conference was held in June, 1825, in Fairfield County. The records of this and three succeeding sessions are not preserved, and the particular place where this initial session was held cannot now be determined. The list of names also of the charter members seems to be lost. The minutes as preserved commence with the session of 1829. At this session the following names appear as "brethren present": Samuel Hiestand, Elijah Collins, John Coons, Nathaniel Havens, Joseph Hoffman, John Russel, John Eckert, James Kinney, Jacob Zeller, and Philip Cramer. Among the additional names for 1830 are Dewalt Mechlin, Lewis Cramer, William Hastings, Andrew Bird, J. Montgomery, and William Ambrose, and in 1831 are found recorded the names of George Benedum, one of the first members of the Miami, Royal Hastings, and William Hanby. Some of the names, however, of the original members remain. Among these was John Coons, afterward bishop, who was licensed to preach in 1823. He became a member of the Miami Conference, and in the division transferred his connection to the new conference. His later years were spent in the Miami. The reader has seen an account of him. A man of renown in this conference was Joshua Montgomery, licensed in the Miami Conference in 1824, and casting his lot with the Scioto Conference in the division. He was often a member of the General Conference. He is remembered as a man of rather short, stout figure, with an earnest face, large head, and deep-set eyes, genial and companionable, an able preacher, and a valuable man in his conference and in the general councils of the Church. Like

Mr. Coons, he was a member of the famous General Conference of 1841.

This conference has contributed its full share of men of strength to the Church. To the office of bishop it gave Hiestand, Coons, Hanby, Edwards, and Davis. Bishop Mills, while being a member of the Iowa Conference at the time of his election to the office, was born and brought up and licensed in the Scioto. These have been elsewhere spoken of. Among the early members of the conference William Ambrose is well remembered. Born in Maryland in 1770, converted in 1789, making an extensive preaching tour through Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio with Bishop Newcomer in 1812, he afterward removed to Highland County, Ohio, and became one of the early builders of the Church in Ohio. Two of his sons, Matthias and Lewis, grandsons of Christian Crum, became preachers, and one of them, Matthias, was three times a member of the General Conference from the Scioto, and afterward twice from the Illinois Conference. He joined the Scioto Conference in 1833. A strong figure in this conference in its earlier years was Elias Vandemark, who was licensed to preach in 1829, and gave a quarter of a century of earnest and successful labor to the Church. Among its present best-known itinerants are G. W. Deaver, George Geiger, W. H. Price, Samuel Whitmore, J. H. Dickson, and others.

This conference, in the earlier days of the Publishing House, was charged with its special oversight during the intervals between the sessions of the General Conference, the trustees being required to account annually to the conference. To the Scioto belongs also the honor of being the first among all the conferences to take effective action with reference to the founding of an educational institution. The account of the founding of Otterbein University



has already been given. For many years, until the organization of the Central Ohio Conference, the college was within the boundaries of the Scioto, a fact which contributed much to the strength and honorable position which the conference acquired.

#### V. THE INDIANA CONFERENCE.

The Indiana Annual Conference, one of the fair daughters of the old Miami, herself the mother of a goodly family, embraces territorially the southern part of the State of Indiana. The conference was organized in the year 1830, meeting in its first session on the 25th of May in that year. The place of meeting was the house of Mr. Stonecypher, about four miles south of Corydon, the county-seat of Harrison County. By the year 1835 the conference had so far extended its territories as to render division advantageous, and the Wabash Conference was formed. In 1846 another division followed, the northern half becoming the White River Conference, while the southern half retained the original name.

Among the early names of this conference are found a number who had already achieved distinction for ability and service as members of the Miami Conference, such as John McNamar, Aaron Farmer, Francis Whitcomb, D. Bonebrake, and B. Abbott—strong names in those days.

Familiar names of later years in this conference were L. S. Chittenden, J. Lopp, Daniel Shuck, J. L. Stearns, J. Scammahorn, J. Ball, and I. K. Haskins. Of these Mr. Shuck and Mr. Haskins alone survive. Mr. Shuck was elected bishop from this conference, at the General Conference at Westerville in 1861. His name has mention in this volume in connection with that conference. Mr. Chittenden was often presiding elder. He was a member of the committee on compiling a hymn-book for the

Church, as ordered by the General Conference of 1857; was a number of times a delegate to the General Conference, and was chaplain of the Sixty-seventh Indiana Regiment in the War. He died at Westfield, Illinois, in June, 1892. Mr. Haskins was frequently presiding elder, and his name is several times found on the General Conference rolls. He removed to Kansas in 1884.

Prominent among the names of the present time in this conference are J. Breden, J. M. Fowler, A. A. Armen, J. T. Demunbrun, J. T. Hobson, and A. W. Arford, all of whom have served the conference as presiding elders. Mr. Hobson has been secretary of the conference since 1879, with the exception of one year, and served five years as presiding elder.

The present membership of this conference is seventy-four ministers, of whom forty-four are in the itinerant ranks, with 10,082 in the laity. There are forty-eight young people's societies, with a membership of 1,444. The Sunday-school enrollment, including officers, teachers, and scholars, is 8,161.

#### VI. THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE.

The old conference of the East, or Hagerstown Conference, remained substantially a unit until the year 1831. Its territory included Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The mention of this conference calls up the names of Otterbein, Boehm, Guething, and others, who spent the whole of their ministerial life within its bounds, sowing the seed of the word, and preparing the way for the generous harvests which were to follow. In the earlier pages of this volume the history of this conference is traced with moderate fullness up to 1815, from which time forward greater attention is given to the successive General Conferences. Meanwhile, the work of development went

forward. The conference increased in numbers, alike of its ministers and membership, until it became advisable, for the greater convenience of serving the various charges, to divide it into two sections. The General Conference of 1829 took appropriate action authorizing the division, in the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That the Hagerstown Conference district be divided to the best advantage, and that the brethren Hildt, Brown, Zahn, and Miller constitute a committee for the purpose.

This committee brought a report to the conference, which was adopted. Of this report the following minute appears on the record :

The committee appointed to divide the Hagerstown Conference district reported that said district shall in the future consist of the State of Virginia and the counties of Washington and Allegheny in Maryland, and that the remaining part of the said district shall constitute a new one, to be called the Harrisburg District.

Both of the names thus assigned by the General Conference were within a few years changed, the old name of Hagerstown District or Conference becoming the Virginia Conference, and the Harrisburg District or Conference becoming the Pennsylvania Conference.

In March, 1830, the old conference met for the last time as one body, at Shopp's Meeting-house, near Shiremans-town, Pennsylvania. Seventy-eight names were at this time enrolled on the ministerial list, and fifty-seven of this number were present. The session was one of peculiar interest. The brethren who had toiled so long in the close fellowship of a single body were henceforth to labor as two companies. A tender Christian fellowship prevailed throughout the session, and the secretary makes this record in the minutes: "Love and unity reigned in the conference." Toward the close of the session the question was asked which of the two bodies, after the division was

consummated, should retain possession of the record. It was answered by the adoption of a resolution :

*Resolved*, That in future the Hagerstown Conference shall have the old protocol [minutes], and that the Harrisburg Conference shall procure a new book.

To this the record adds the following minute : "Bishop Kumler gave to William Brown two dollars, with which he shall purchase a new protocol for the Harrisburg Conference, and shall transcribe from the old into the new all important proceedings."

From this session was missed the presence of the venerable Bishop Newcomer, the first time for a long series of years. Just a few months before, he was called into the presence of the Master.

The Hagerstown Conference, whose name soon after appears as the Virginia, convened in its first separate session on April 27, 1831, at Mill Creek, Shenandoah County, Virginia. Twenty ministers were present at the opening session : Henry Kumler, Sen., bishop, William R. Rhinehart, Henry Burtner, J. Krock, G. Patterson, G. Guething, J. Zahn, W. Kinnear, W. Miller, P. Witzel, Jacob Rhinehart, J. Houck, G. Hoffman, N. Woodyard, J. Haney, H. Higgins, J. Hass, P. Harmon, W. Knott, and Jacob Erb, of Pennsylvania. Early in the session a young man of slender build, not yet nineteen years old, was presented as an applicant for license to preach. For forty-two years the Church knew him as Bishop Glossbrenner. Two years later the names of J. M. Hershey, G. Rimal, W. R. Coursey, and G. A. Shuey appear in the minutes ; in 1834 Jacob Bachtel was admitted, and in 1838 Jacob Markwood. Glossbrenner, Markwood, and Bachtel gave great strength to the conference, and a high standing before the General Conferences. Other men of distinction appeared from time to time, as J. W. Howe, George W. Statton,



I. K. Statton, John Ruebush, W. T. Lower, C. B. Hammack, H. A. Bovey, and J. Rodruck. Of these, Mr. Howe remains in the conference, the Stattons and H. A. Bovey are in the West, the others are in the kingdom above. Z. Warner became a member of the Parkersburg Conference. Younger than any of these is Bishop J. W. Hott, also of this conference. Among others well known are George P. Hott, A. P. Funkhouser, C. P. Dyche, W. R. Berry, J. D. Donovan, and W. F. Gruver. Many others of its men, among them A. M. Evers, C. T. Stearn, and the Grimms, are in other fields. Charles M. Hott, a brother of the bishop, a man of brilliant gifts and great usefulness, after twenty-two years of devoted service, died in 1890. His remains lie buried in the beautiful cemetery of Woodbridge, California.

The Virginia Conference, in the men it has given to the Church and in the work it has accomplished, has made for itself a noble record. Many have been the brave workers who, in the more than sixty years of its existence, have toiled and gone to their reward. In no other conference was the heroism of the ministers and people tried as in this through the dark period of the War, when, for three years, their territory was a great battlefield. The conference has provided nobly for the education of its young people in rearing and supporting Shenandoah Institute.

#### VII. THE PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE.

The Harrisburg Conference, as named by the General Conference of 1829, became, not long after its separate organization, the Pennsylvania Conference, the latter designation expressing more appropriately its geographical position. The first session of the conference, as newly organized, was held in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, in April, 1831, with thirty-one ministers present. Five

candidates for license to preach were received, making the number thirty-six. Two years later the boundaries of the conference were so extended as to embrace the territory west of the Alleghany Mountains, including Westmoreland and Washington counties, where a number of societies had been established, and which had been under the care of the Muskingum Conference since its organization in 1818. The conference now included the whole of Pennsylvania and a portion of Maryland. With this large territory before it the conference addressed itself to the work with much energy, and grew so rapidly that in 1838, seven years after the separation from the old or Hagerstown Conference, at a session at Wormleysburg, Cumberland County, there were ninety-eight preachers present. To this number nine were added during the session, making one hundred and seven. In this year the portion west of the Alleghany Mountains was set off, forming the Allegheny Conference, thus considerably reducing the number of preachers.

In the year 1846 another division was made, by which the East Pennsylvania Conference was formed. The Pennsylvania Conference was now known for a few years as the West Pennsylvania. The name "West" was soon dropped, and the old name without prefix restored, on account of the possible invalidation of titles to bequests made to the conference under its old name. There were sixty-nine ministers in the conference at the time of the division. Of these thirty-four remained in the Pennsylvania Conference, while thirty-five were enrolled with the East Pennsylvania.

This conference enrolled in its earlier as well as later days many men who served the Church with signal ability. Among these was Jacob Erb, who was licensed as a preacher in the original conference in 1823. Another was

John Russel, licensed in 1818. Both of these became bishops, and both have been spoken of. George Miller, one of the foremost men of that time, joined the conference in 1833, serving with great success until 1851. Jacob Winter was one of the most successful laborers, his field being in the western part of the State. Christian Crider, son of Rev. John Crider, a man of devout heart and most exemplary life, was licensed to preach in 1835. At the separation in 1846 he cast his lot with the East Pennsylvania Conference. He is remembered as a man and preacher of worthiest type. He died in March, 1850. J. S. Kessler, not educated, not brilliant in the pulpit, was a most industrious worker and one of the most acceptable men of the conference. At the division of the conference in 1846 his name was enrolled with the East Pennsylvania. An interesting biography of Mr. Kessler was written by Dr. I. L. Kephart. Samuel Huber was a man of mark in this conference. An autobiography of him was published some years ago.

Among the younger men at the time of the division were J. C. Smith and Alexander Owen. Smith advanced rapidly to the front. He preached ably in both English and German, and was an indefatigable and successful worker. Owen was one of the most lovable of men, a preacher of great ability, became president of Mount Pleasant College, and, upon its transfer to Otterbein University, editor of the *Unity Magazine*, and later president of Otterbein University. He died, greatly lamented, at the early age of forty-one. Z. A. Colestock, of Dutch descent, born in 1824, began preaching in 1844. After a long life of useful service, much honored and loved by his brethren, he now waits in contented old age, with his companion by his side, for the Master's final call. In the year 1846 John Dickson took his first work in this con-

ference. The reader has made his acquaintance as Bishop Dickson. Among the most useful members of this conference, a successful revivalist and pastor, and greatly interested in Sunday-school work, is H. A. Schlichter, who became a member in 1861. He will not lay down the sword until he exchanges it for the harp. Among the laymen of this conference Mr. Jacob Hoke, who died several years ago, holds a distinguished place. He was long a member of the Publishing House and other boards of the Church, and was the author of several valuable works, among them "The Great Invasion," the history of Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania, esteemed one of the best war histories ever written. A name long familiar in the roll of this conference was that of W. B. Raber. He served frequently in the office of presiding elder, and was a number of times in the General Conference. Other familiar names, a number of them on the General Conference records, are A. H. Rice, J. L. Grimm, B. F. Daugherty, J. R. Hutchison, J. R. Jones, Dr. I. H. Albright, J. P. Anthony, J. T. Shaffer, Dr. C. A. Burtner, H. B. Spayd. Dr. C. T. Stearn has long been a leading member of this conference, serving successfully a number of its best stations. He was elected to the General Conference in 1881, and to each conference since up to the present. In this body, as also in the Virginia and Pennsylvania conferences, he was among the staunchest in advocating the constitutional reforms which have recently been consummated, urging their adoption when it was unpopular to be a liberal.

The Pennsylvania Conference, by special arrangement with the congregation of the old Otterbein Church in Baltimore, made soon after Otterbein's death, supplied that church with pastors until the organization of the East German Conference, since which time pastors have been supplied by the latter conference. The conference has



seventy-four ministers, of whom sixty-six are itinerant. Its general membership is 11,653. Its Sunday-school enrollment is, teachers and scholars, 17,569, over fifty per cent. above the church membership, showing a high degree of activity in the Sunday-school work. The membership of the young people's societies is over 3,600.

#### VIII. THE EAST PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE.

All history of the Harrisburg, or Pennsylvania, Conference between the years 1830 and 1846 belongs to the Pennsylvania and East Pennsylvania conferences alike, the division of the conference district occurring in the latter year. In the year 1847 the eastern and western divisions met for the first time in separate sessions. The prefixes "East" and "West" were attached to the names by the General Conference of 1845 when authorizing the division, and the name "West" was, four years later, dropped from the Pennsylvania for reasons already noted. The journal of the conference, including a copy of the minutes of the old or Hagerstown Conference from 1800 down to 1830, and the original record from the latter date to 1846, passed into the possession of the East Pennsylvania Conference.

The first separate session of this conference was held at Brechbill's Meeting-house, near Annville, on March 4, 1847, Bishop Hanby presiding. The number of ministers enrolled was thirty-five, of whom twenty-six were in attendance; the laity numbered about fifteen hundred. Among these were a number of men whose names became broadly known, as Solomon Vonnieda and David Strickler, both of whom were editors of the *Fröhliche Botschafter*, and the former publishing agent; John A. Sand, an able German preacher; John Doerkson, born in Germany, a man of much strength; Jacob Scholler, later of the Ohio

German Conference; John C. Smith, who is remembered by many; Gideon Smith; D. Gingerich; Andrew Steigerwalt, who transferred to the East German Conference; George A. Mark, Sen., a man of much influence in the conference counsels.

Others who followed and are deceased were: George A. Mark, Israel Carpenter, W. S. H. Keys, the last two noted as eloquent preachers; Carpenter was blind for many years; C. S. Meily, distinguished as a linguist and Oriental scholar; his valuable library is in Union Biblical Seminary; Dr. J. W. Etter, author, professor, and editor; Lewis Peters, a successful preacher, four times in the General Conference; Isaiah Baltzell, a delightful music writer, whose name is closely joined with that of E. S. Lorenz, and whose songs and music continue to give pleasure to thousands. Others, as Dr. I. L. Kephart, Dr. I. H. Albright, Jacob H. Mark, and T. P. Orner, have transferred to other conferences.

Among those now prominent in this conference, some in service elsewhere, are Dr. S. D. Faust, professor in Union Biblical Seminary; Dr. Ezekiel Light, chaplain of the National Military Home, at Dayton, Ohio; Dr. C. J. Kephart, Sunday-school secretary for the State association of Pennsylvania; H. B. Dohner, prominent in the Sunday-school work of the conference and State; Dr. J. P. Miller, one of the ablest preachers and most successful pastors of the conference; D. D. Lowery and M. J. Mumma, long among its safest counselors; E. Ludwick, H. C. Phillips, H. Ü. Roop, successful preachers and laborers; C. I. B. Brane, who recently transferred from the Maryland Conference. One of the long-familiar figures in the General Conference sessions is Dr. G. W. M. Rigor, noted for his steady opposition to radicalism and his support of reform movements. He was closely associated with the publication

of the *United Brethren Tribune*, a paper opposed to extreme radicalism and advocating constitutional reform and more liberal legislation. The paper was published in Harrisburg, with Light and Rigor as editors, and was discontinued when the objects it advocated were accomplished. He was also connected with Isaiah Baltzell in the publication of the *Musical Visitor*, a monthly in which the uniform Sunday-school lessons were published in 1872, prior to the commencement of the International lesson courses, the latter beginning with January, 1873.

The East Pennsylvania has long held the position of one of the most progressive conferences of the Church, a place gained in part through its unflinching attitude during the long period of radical agitation. In Sunday-school and educational work it holds a place well at the front. Before the general Sunday-School Board placed the Sunday-school secretary in the field, the conference Sunday-school convention employed Rev. H. V. Mohn to hold institutes throughout the conference district. This same work was afterward placed in the hands of the presiding elders and made a part of their regular duties.

The conference has churches in nearly all the larger towns and cities in its territory, most of them in a prosperous condition. It has a membership of 8,313, with sixty-five ministers, of whom sixty-two are in the itinerant ranks. Its activity in the Sunday-school work is suggested by the fact that it enrolls 12,715 teachers and scholars, a number more than fifty per cent. greater than that of its church membership. Nearly three thousand names are enrolled in its young people's societies.

#### IX. THE ALLEGHENY CONFERENCE.

As early as 1803 John G. Pfrimmer and Christian Berger went into western Pennsylvania and preached the

word in Westmoreland and Washington counties. In November of the same year Christian Newcomer visited the locality, preaching for a time with great success. Of a meeting at John Bonnet's School-house, where the first General Conference was held twelve years later, he says in his Journal, "I had not spoken long before some of my hearers fell to the floor; others stood trembling and crying so loud that my voice could not be heard." On the next day he preached in the evening at a private house. Of this he says: "The power of God was displayed in a most marvelous manner. The whole congregation was moved. Mourning and lamentation were general. Some of the most stubborn sinners fell before the power of God. The meeting continued the whole night, and some were enabled to rejoice in the pardoning love of God." On a Sabbath soon after he preached in a barn, with from three to four hundred people present. Some, unable to gain admittance, stood without in a drenching rain. He speaks of the occasion as "a Pentecost." Some, he says, fell from their seats; some lay as if they were dead. The weeping and crying and praying came from every part of the house.

Thus amid lowly scenes, in private houses or barns, were laid, here as in many other places, the foundations of the Church. It is not always amid the environments of luxury, in churches richly adorned with elegance and splendor, or under the sound of organs or orchestras, that the great soul-struggles are accomplished through which men enter into life. Even so amid rude surroundings in a humble spot over the seas the great Shepherd of the sheep brought to the world its richest joy.

The Allegheny Conference, though the Church was founded so early, did not become a distinct organization until the year 1839. A portion of the territory occupied



by it had earlier, as has been seen, formed a part of the Muskingum Conference. In 1833 the General Conference attached all of the Muskingum Conference lying in Pennsylvania to the Pennsylvania Conference. At the session of the Pennsylvania Conference in 1838, at Wormleysburg, there were present ninety-eight preachers and some forty laymen, so that the question of entertainment became an embarrassing one, while the long distances for travel further suggested the propriety of division. By general consent, as was sometimes done in the earlier days, the conference agreed upon a division, without previous action of the General Conference.

The Allegheny Conference met in its first separate session on March 25, 1839, at Mount Pleasant, in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. The conference roll contained twenty-nine names. Fourteen ministers were present, namely, Harmonius Ow, John R. Sitman, Joseph Zumbro, George Miller, John Rathfon, John Wallace, Adolphus Hamden, Isaac Coones, Martin Houser, William Beighel, Daniel Worman, Jacob Ritter, Henry Metzger, and William B. Lewis. Among those not present was Henry Kephart, father of Bishop E. B. Kephart and Drs. I. L. and C. J. Kephart. Among those received into membership was George Wagoner, father of Rev. George Wagoner who perished with some of his family in the Johnstown flood in 1889; also John L. Baker, who is still living, at the advanced age of eighty-six, at Mount Pleasant.

This conference has produced a very considerable number of men who have become widely known to the Church, some of them in fields remote from the place of their birth. Among these may be named Jacob Ritter, the only surviving member from 1838, who published at an early day "Ritter's Sketches," a small volume which served a useful purpose for ministers; J. B. Resler, long known

in connection with Otterbein University ; George Keister, professor in Union Biblical Seminary, deceased ; Bishop E. B. Kephart, I. L. Kephart, C. J. Kephart, H. A. Thompson ; A. L. DeLong, for a time a professor in Western College ; D. D. DeLong, twelve years president of Lebanon Valley College ; George A. Funkhouser, senior professor in Union Biblical Seminary ; S. B. Allen, professor in Otterbein University and president of Westfield College. Among other well-known names are W. B. Dick, Isaiah Potter, M. Spangler, J. Medsger, D. Speck, B. F. Noon, D. Sheerer, R. S. Woodward. Among the younger men are H. F. Shupe, editor of the *Watchword* ; L. W. Stahl, a man of recognized efficiency ; W. J. Zuck, professor in Otterbein University ; J. I. L. Resler, L. F. John, W. R. Funk, and A. L. Funk, men of growing strength ; J. M. Leshner and J. R. King, who have rendered valuable service as missionaries to Africa. Samuel S. Snyder, who went early to Kansas, and fell a victim to Quantrell's raiders in the first year of the War, was a member of this conference.

The Allegheny Conference has taken a place among the foremost in progressive character. As early as 1840, thirteen years before the organization of the general Missionary Society, it formed the Home Missionary Society of the Allegheny Conference. In 1847 it took preliminary action leading to the founding of Mount Pleasant College. In the same year, with the view of securing better qualifications for its ministry, it ordered the arrangement of a special course of reading, upon the general plan of that now found in the Discipline.

In general church membership the Allegheny Conference leads all the other conferences, the number being 12,383. In Sunday-school enrollment and in membership in young people's associations it is surpassed only by the Pennsylvania Conference.

## X. THE SANDUSKY CONFERENCE.

The first member of the United Brethren Church within the territory of the Sandusky Conference, so far as is known, was Rev. Jacob Baulus, who, in the year 1822, removed with his family from Maryland, and settled upon an uncultivated farm near Fremont, Ohio. He soon opened his house for religious services, gathered about him his neighbors, preached to them the gospel, and formed a society. The General Conference of 1829 attached a portion of Sandusky County to the Muskingum Conference, and it was named Sandusky Circuit. The Muskingum Conference at its next session made this circuit the nucleus of a presiding-elder's district, naming it Sandusky District. Mr. Baulus was elected elder for the district, and J. Zahn preacher on the Sandusky Circuit. Other circuits were soon formed, and the work was strengthened by the arrival of United Brethren families from the East. Among them were several preachers, as George Hiskey, John Smith, Philip Cramer, Henry Kimberlin, John and Jacob Crum, Israel Harrington, Daniel Strayer, and others.

In view of this rapid growth, the General Conference of 1833 authorized the organization. The first session was held on May 12 of the following year, at the house of Philip Bretz, near Melmore, Seneca County, Bishop Hiestand presiding. Twenty ministers were present at the organization. Six names were added to the list. Thus the conference entered upon its career with an enrollment of twenty-six preachers. All of these have passed on into the great beyond. The territory of the conference at its organization embraced all it now possesses, a portion of that now occupied by the Central Ohio Conference, and all that part of Ohio now belonging to the North Ohio Conference.

Among the most useful of the early ministers of this conference was Stephen Lillibridge. His brief career, lasting only eight years, was marked by incessant labor. From his diary it appeared that he had preached over nineteen hundred sermons, or an average of nearly five for each week. He died near Findlay, Ohio, in 1843, at the early age of twenty-eight. At the second session of the conference, in 1835, Henry G. Spayth came into this conference on transfer. He rendered the Church an invaluable service in writing a history of its earlier periods, mention of which has been made in the preceding pages.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Spayth died at Tiffin, Ohio, on September 2, 1873. Joseph Bever, a successful preacher and safe counselor, joined this conference in 1835. He compiled the "Christian Songster," long acceptable to the Church. He died at a ripe age, at Fostoria, in November, 1896. A. Spracklin was esteemed an able expounder of the Word. John C. Bright became a member of the conference in 1841. To him, as practically the founder of the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society, the Church is greatly indebted. He died in 1866.<sup>2</sup> John Lawrence, fourteen years editor of the *Religious Telescope*, has been elsewhere referred to. D. Glancy was a devoted and successful laborer, and won many to the Church and to Christ. William Mathers became a member of the conference in 1847. He wrote a brief history of the conference. After fifty years of connection with the conference he still remains strong in the esteem of his brethren.

Alexander Biddle, one of the oldest living ministers in the Church, having reached the age of Otterbein and Boehm, was born in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, in April, 1810, and has nearly completed his eighty-seventh year. He was licensed to preach in 1830, and ordained

<sup>1</sup> See p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 427, 428.



by the first Bishop Kumler in 1832. He has been a member of the Sandusky Conference since 1847, or fifty years, and in the ministry sixty-seven years. He remained in the active itinerancy about sixty-four years, since which time he has sustained a local relation, preaching when strength would permit. He was a member of the General Conference of 1841; also elected to that of 1837, but not present; afterward elected to each conference up to 1865. In his great age there is a beautiful ripening of the Christian graces. In a recent letter, written from his home in Galion, Ohio, he says: "I am feeling keenly the burden of almost eighty-seven years, but am enjoying fair health. As to the future, I am living by the day, with a bright prospect of the heirship of eternal life. . . . In the quiet of my lonely home my soul feasts on the riches of divine grace. The time of the sunset has come, but its tints are those of a golden autumn day. The sun is going down without a cloud, and as the earthly is fading out of sight, the heavenly breaks upon my vision, and I long to be at home in the bright eternal day which has no sunset." In his concluding words Mr. Biddle expresses great delight with the progress which the Church has made since he entered its ministry three-quarters of a century ago. There is a beautiful eloquence in this serene old age, so near the borderland of the heavenly, waiting for the chariots of Israel.

Among other men of recognized usefulness in this conference in a later period, who have all died, were M. Bulger, S. T. Lane, Alvan Rose, C. L. Barlow, E. M. Bell, Chester Briggs (later of the Miami), F. Clymer, and W. McDowell. Among others prominent in their day, but now retired, are Levi Moore, Isaac Crouse, elsewhere spoken of as the author of our organized Sunday-school system, W. Martin, J. F. Seiler, William Nevill, George Bender, W. W. McCurdy,

and T. D. Ingle. Among others now in the active service are D. R. Miller, transferred from Auglaize in 1867, T. J. Harbaugh, W. A. Keesy, S. H. Raudebaugh, J. F. Hill, J. W. Hicks, G. L. Bender, I. P. Lea, W. R. Arnold, J. H. Arnold, H. Doty, C. N. Crabbs, I. E. Barnes, R. French, and W. S. Sage, the last once connected with the mission work in Africa. Dr. Miller has been since 1885 the energetic financial manager of Union Biblical Seminary.

The Sandusky Conference has steadily stood in the front rank in all progressive movements of the Church. It was the second to give its voice for building a college for the Church,—Otterbein University,—gave strong approval to the proposition to build a theological seminary, supported vigorously the *pro rata* and lay-delegation movements, and urged more liberal legislation on the secret-society question, while always loyal to the general interests of the Church even when controlled by those who radically opposed the measures it advocated. Some years ago, for the purpose of providing more efficiently for local educational needs, the conference built Fostoria Academy, at Fostoria, Ohio. The work done in the institution proved highly satisfactory, but the income for its support being insufficient, it was recently closed.

#### XI. THE UPPER WABASH CONFERENCE.

In the vigorous extension of the Church toward the West new conferences were rapidly formed. The Indiana Conference, one of the prosperous daughters of the Miami, soon gave to the Church daughters of her own household. Among these was the Wabash, the northern portion of which afterward became the Upper Wabash. The first session of the Wabash Conference was held as early as September, 1835, in Parke County, Indiana. Thirteen preachers were enrolled, and six circuits were recognized,

divided into two presiding-elder's districts. The elders chosen for the first year were William Davis and John Denham, Mr. Davis taking also a circuit. The other itinerants were James Griffith, E. T. Cook, James Davis, Josiah Davis, and J. T. Timmons. John Hoobler soon after became a fellow-laborer with these pioneer itinerants. Several of these names afterward became widely familiar. Of William Davis it has already been said that he became president of Otterbein University and later of Western College. James Davis became prominent as a revivalist and ingatherer of souls. Mr. Griffith, in his young life a skeptic, became one of the foremost of the preachers in the West. He was an earnest abolitionist in the days when it was unpopular to affirm the equal rights of men. He was often in the General Conference, and was marked for his manly sincerity. John Denham was an able and successful preacher in this company of itinerants.

Almost throughout the entire Church the conditions of itinerant life have so greatly changed from those of half a century or more ago that it may be well to preserve here a picture as given by one of the ablest, as well as most devoted, of the preachers of that time. It is from the pen of William Davis. In a letter to a friend, written in the spring of 1846, Mr. Davis said: "A few evenings ago, while sitting by my fireside, looking forward to the labor and exposure and privation which I must endure during the conference year which has just commenced, my mind was carried back to the past; whereupon, I hunted up my old diary, by the aid of which I reached the following facts and conclusions: That I have been an itinerant minister in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ sixteen years; that I have traveled for ministerial purposes fifty-four thousand two hundred miles; that I have preached (or tried to preach) five

thousand one hundred and ten sermons; that I have received as an earthly remuneration six hundred and fifty-two dollars; that the Lord has hitherto helped me; and that it would be wickedness to distrust so good a friend in time to come. My time has been spent chiefly on the frontiers, among poor people; and could I lead some of my rich brethren along the Indian trails, or more dimly-beaten paths, to the cabins in the woods, and introduce them to meanly-clad parents, surrounded by almost naked children, and let them worship and mingle their prayers, songs, and tears around the same altar, they too would love those poor brethren, excuse their scanty contributions, and of their abundance give something for the support of the missionary who, perhaps, with ragged clothes and naked knees (for I have preached with naked knees) is preaching on the frontiers.”<sup>1</sup> This portrayal presents, not the experience of a solitary individual, but broadly that of the pioneer missionary of those days.

The Wabash Conference in 1858 was divided, forming the Upper and Lower Wabash conferences. The two conferences together number about nineteen thousand souls. Of this number 7,437 are in the Upper Wabash, its Sunday-school enrollment being about eight thousand. Prominent in its present ministry are T. M. Hamilton, O. P. Cooper, J. W. Nye, J. Cowgill, R. M. Zuck, A. M. Snyder, and others. Mr. Hamilton, as others of these men, has long been a familiar figure on the floor of the General Conference. The conference has sixty ministers, of whom forty-one are in the itinerant ranks.

Mrs. Lydia Sexton, whose field was widely the Church, was in a degree identified with this conference, receiving from it credentials at the session of 1859. Having been born in April, 1799, she was then well advanced in years,

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence's *History*, Vol. II., p. 275.



but had been preaching for many years with a quarterly-conference license. One year, 1870, was spent, with great success, as chaplain of the Kansas Penitentiary. Her life was one of extensive usefulness. She died at Seattle, Washington, at the advanced age of ninety-three.

## XII. THE LOWER WABASH CONFERENCE.

The ministers whose residence, on the division of the Wabash Conference, fell within the territory assigned as the Lower Wabash, assembled in their first separate session on March 17, 1859, at Westfield, Illinois. Bishop Edwards presided. The following ministers responded to their names on roll-call: W. C. Smith, S. Mills, S. Busard, E. Shuey, R. W. Belknap, H. Elwell, W. M. Givens, J. W. Nye, H. Clark, J. P. Shuey, John Burtner, W. H. Brown, A. Bales, S. G. Brock, J. Cottman, A. Dunbar, A. Helton, M. Hail, E. Jackson, G. P. Jackson, J. McKee, S. Rush, S. Stark, and J. Severe.

Of this number the first nine remain, and the first three continue in the active ministry, well advanced in years, but retaining much of the zeal of their youth. Mr. Smith has given a large part of his life to the financial service of Westfield College, has been a delegate to six General Conferences, and for nearly forty years has served on some of the general boards of the Church. Now, as the time of the sunset is coming, he is toiling cheerfully as a presiding elder of one of the districts. S. Mills has given similar prolonged service to the conference and Church. He has been eight times a delegate to the General Conference, and has been in the presiding-eldership or served as agent for Westfield College since 1863. Dr. I. L. Kephart, editor of the *Religious Telescope*, is a member of this conference. Dr. W. H. Klinefelter, six years president of Westfield College, had his membership trans-

ferred recently to the Miami. Prof. W. R. Shuey, in the chair of mathematics in Westfield College since the founding, and Prof. L. H. Cooley, formerly in the chair of ancient languages, are among the members of this conference. The conference possesses a progressive spirit, and some years ago opened its doors for the admission of women to membership. On its rolls are the names of Mrs. Alva Roberts, Mrs. H. J. Musselman, and Mrs. C. A. Stevenson.

In the days when the anti-secret-society agitation so greatly disturbed the Church, this conference was strongly radical. Its leading men, however, had a higher regard for the unity and welfare of the Church than for the perpetuation of radicalism; and so, when the General Conference of 1885 appointed the Commission for the revision of the Constitution and Confession of Faith, its three presiding elders, W. M. Givens, S. Mills, and J. G. Shuey, in counsel together, resolved to do all in their power to hold the ministers and people in their districts in thorough loyalty to the Church. In this they were entirely successful. The conference remained a unit throughout the troublesome period of the secession. Had some others in high official position taken a similar and really Christian course, they might have prevented much evil.

Numerically, the Lower Wabash Conference stands among the foremost in the Church, its ministerial roll embracing ninety-one names, with a general membership of 11,360. Its Sunday-school enrollment is 12,356, and its young people's societies have a membership of 1,835.

## CHAPTER II

### OTHER CONFERENCES ORGANIZED FROM 1835 TO 1853

THE period from 1835 to 1853 was one of great missionary activity, although the general Missionary Society was not yet organized. The reader has just seen that the Wabash Conference was organized in 1835, with thirteen ministers and six circuits. Within ten years the Wabash became the prolific mother of three additional conferences—the Iowa, the St. Joseph, and the Illinois. The thirteen ministers had increased in this time to ninety-nine, and the six charges to forty-eight.

#### I. THE IOWA CONFERENCE.

Iowa Conference was the first conference formed in the vast territory west of the Mississippi ceded by France to the United States in 1803, and known as the "Louisiana Purchase." Iowa was organized as a Territory in 1838 and as a State in 1846. Among the early settlers were persons from United Brethren communities, including a few United Brethren preachers. About 1836 John Burns, a local preacher, and Christian Troup, a member of the Wabash Conference, came and soon established preaching places. Ira B. Ryan, at the time a layman, formed, in 1841, the first class. The first quarterly conference was held at what is now Lisbon in 1842. Early ministers of prominence were John Everhart, F. R. S. Byrd, and A. A. Sellers.

In March, 1843, a meeting was held in which annual-conference business was transacted, and in the fall of

1843 a similar meeting was held, a presiding elder of the Wabash Conference being present. Bishop H. Kumler, Jun., presided over the Iowa "Branch of the Wabash Conference" in May, 1844. On August 14, 1845, at William Thompson's, in Louisa County, Bishop Russel formally organized the conference, though at the present time it dates its beginning back to 1844. The conference grew rapidly, and in 1853 was divided, the southern portion being named the Des Moines Conference, a part of which, under the name of East Des Moines, was reunited with Iowa Conference in 1890. In 1861 North Iowa Conference was formed, and this, after varied struggles and successes, was reunited with the original conference in 1874. Good results have followed these consolidations. With an increased number of ministers who have received a college or seminary training, and with a settled purpose to enter places where permanent work can be built up, the prospects of the conference are steadily improving.

Among those deceased, or no longer connected with the conference, who have held a prominent place, may be mentioned S. Weaver, William Davis, S. W. Kern, S. Sutton, D. Wenrich, M. Bowman, and M. S. Drury, now a member of California Conference.

The Iowa Conference entered early the educational field, taking the first steps toward founding Western College within ten years after its organization. Its general church membership, according to the latest statistics, is 6,800. Its ministers number eighty-three. Among these are Bishops Kephart and Mills, Dr. L. Bookwalter, president of Western College, Prof. A. W. Drury, of the theological seminary, Dr. M. R. Drury, of the *Religious Telescope*, Dr. I. K. Statton, Dr. W. I. Beatty, W. D. Hartsough, R. E. Williams, L. B. Hix, and others who are men of influence in the conference.



The story of the toils and hardships of the early pioneers in this conference and elsewhere, in the work of laying the foundations of the Church, would possess a thrilling interest, and be sufficient to fill volumes.

## II. THE ST. JOSEPH CONFERENCE.

The St. Joseph Conference, located in northern Indiana and southern Michigan, was formed by separation from the Wabash by the General Conference of 1845. A session of the conference was held at North Manchester, Indiana, which, in the absence of a bishop, was presided over by J. M. Hershey. The first regular session, from which the conference takes its date, Bishop Glossbrenner presiding, was held at Leffle's Church in 1846. The names of some of the charter members of the conference, recognized as leaders in the work, are J. M. Hershey, William Davis, Josiah Davis, J. Suman, J. Fetterhoff, J. Thomas, J. B. Slight, J. Farmer, J. Freeman, F. L. Forbes, J. S. Todd, and R. Baker. To this number was added H. A. Snepp, who, after a long and faithful life of half a century in the ministry, has recently been called to the final reward. J. Thomas, now of the North Ohio, is one of this original number yet living. R. Baker, one of the first members, is living, and remains in connection with the conference. Many of these men had been for years in the service in the Wabash Conference, and even in the Indiana before the Wabash was formed, and were already veterans in the toils and hardships of missionary life. J. Suman was a man of remarkable power as a preacher and revivalist. Next to him as successful laborers were J. Demunbrun, J. Babcock, and William Davis, men of distinguished abilities, and gathering rich harvests into the Church. The conference began with nineteen ministers and about three hundred

in the laity. The present number of ministers, according to the latest statistics, is an even one hundred, of whom seventy-eight are itinerant and twenty-two local. The general membership is 10,939. Its Sunday-school enrollment for 1896 was 13,681, and its membership in its eighty-three young people's societies was 2,780.

The conference has given to the Church Bishop N. Castle and Dr. W. M. Bell, both of whom are elsewhere spoken of. Among other names well known are J. F. Bartmess, George Sickafoose, F. Thomas, C. H. Bell, J. Simons, R. J. Parrett, J. L. Parks, A. J. Cummins, and A. M. Cummins.

### III. THE ILLINOIS CONFERENCE.

In the year 1835 there was but a single circuit of the United Brethren in the State of Illinois, and that circuit a mission. In the same year John Dunham was appointed presiding elder for the State. The fertile and almost boundless prairies presented an irresistible attraction to immigration, and with the pioneer settler came the pioneer minister. Mr. Dunham was soon joined by Josiah Davis and John Hoobler. Others followed, and ten years later, when the Illinois Conference was formed, the names of twenty-one ministers were enrolled. The conference was formed by separation from the Wabash, as the Wabash itself had been from the Indiana. Bishop Russel presided at this first conference, and the following are the names of the members: John Dunham, Josiah Terrell, J. P. Eckles, Robert Baker, David Breeding, J. T. Timmons, Frederick Kenoyer, Alexander Long, J. T. Manderville, J. B. McVey, Hiram Freeman, Jacob A. Kenoyer, J. D. Hock, Charles Sleight, Isaac Hesser, James Davis, George Brewer, Clark Jenks, B. E. Shields, James Haines, and Lyman Jenks. Most of these men possessed in a high

degree the pioneer missionary spirit. John Dunham, whose name is frequently met, was brave, hardy, and true. Seeing in the broad plains of Illinois the promise of a goodly inheritance, he entered in to possess the land. Josiah Terrell, a leader in the social gaieties of his neighborhood, soon after his conversion began to preach. J. A. Kenoyer and M. Ambrose became familiar names in the annals of the Church. Isaac Kretzinger entered the conference at an early date; a plain, earnest man, rendering the Church much valuable service, but intensely radical on the secrecy question, and going off with the radical secession. P. F. Smith, also for a time prominent in the conference, went in the same way. This conference at the first included all the territory now occupied by the Central Illinois and Rock River conferences. By the separation of these into independent conferences, its territory became more circumscribed. It has now thirty-three ministers, all on the itinerant list, with a membership of 3,327.

#### IV. THE WHITE RIVER CONFERENCE.

The White River Conference was formed by separation from the Indiana, in 1846. The Indiana convened on February 30, and in accordance with the permission given by the General Conference of 1854 it separated itself into two sections, the southern part retaining the name Indiana, and the northern part taking the name of White River. Bishop Hanby presided at this conference. In the White River two elder's districts were formed, D. Stover and W. W. Richardson being chosen presiding elders.

The first separate session of the White River Conference was held January 18, 1847, in Washington, Wayne County, Indiana, Bishop Russel presiding. Among the leading names at this session are found those of J. A. Ball, D. Stover, W. W. Richardson, and Caleb B. Witt. Mr. Witt

was the father of William Barton Witt, M.D., who was one of the early missionaries of the Church in West Africa. In 1849, three years after the formation of the conference, the number of ministers was thirty-five, and 2,748 members were reported. Among the leaders of this conference, in addition to the men above named, are found the names of Milton Wright, J. T. Vardaman, T. Evans, Halleck Floyd, J. M. Kabrich, I. M. Tharp, Z. McNew, all of whom, with C. W. Witt, were in the General Conferences from 1861 to 1889.

This conference, with its excellent territory and numerous strong men, suffered more than any other of the larger conferences from determined radicalism. Two of its men, M. Wright and H. Floyd, became bishops in the radical church. Under the influence of strong leaders the radical feeling had gained great strength, and a large proportion of both ministers and people were carried away with the secession. Hartsville College, to which reference has elsewhere been made, was lost to the Church by sale under execution.

The conference at the present time has fifty-four ministers and 7,183 members. It has ninety-one Sunday schools, with an enrollment of 7,538. The membership of its young people's societies is 1,708. Among its leading ministers at the present time are A. C. Wilmore, J. T. Roberts, M. L. Bailey, D. O. Darling, and Alonzo Myer.

The conference is hopefully rebuilding, and there is before it a future of goodly promise.

#### V. THE NORTH OHIO CONFERENCE.

The North Ohio Conference was organized in the year 1853, at Leoni, Jackson County, Michigan. Its territory embraces northwestern Ohio, northeastern Indiana, and southeastern Michigan, previously included in the San-



dusky and Michigan conferences. Bishop Markwood presided at the first session. The names of ministers enrolled were Aaron Bowser, T. Osmun, J. Preston, John Kurtz, C. Crossland, John Martin, Nathan Hale, John Miller, H. W. Cherry, Joseph Fink, George Struble, J. Lower, J. Gear, R. T. Martin, and D. Holmes—fifteen in number. Of these the first nine have passed over the river. The lay membership at the time of the organization was about twelve hundred. Through the early years of the conference some of those recognized as leaders were J. N. Martin, J. K. Alwood, Bowser, Kurtz, Fink, Gear, and Lower. The last two are still members of the conference, and Martin is deceased. Alwood went out with the secession. Among those best known now are S. P. Klotz, J. W. Lilly, D. B. Keller, C. M. Eberly, J. S. Tedrow. Keller is a member of the general Missionary Board, and Lilly and Keller are members of the Court of Appeals.

Some of the strongest leaders in the radical movement were found in this conference, among them notably J. K. Alwood. Under this able leadership this conference suffered severely, about one-half of its ministers and people being carried out of the Church with the radical secession.

#### VI. THE OHIO GERMAN CONFERENCE.

The Ohio German Conference was organized October 20, 1853, at Germantown, Ohio, Bishop Edwards presiding. It was formed by separation chiefly from the Miami Conference, not in a geographical sense, but by a separate organization of the German ministers and churches. Its territory includes Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, and the conference is permitted to enter any other State or Territory westward. Among its early ministers were Jacob Scholler, John Kreider, Christopher Flinchbaugh, George Baker, John Blouch, F. Schwab. Scholler was born in Alsace, Germany,

in 1812, was converted in the old Otterbein Church, Baltimore, began to preach in 1840, and labored with great success for ten years in Pennsylvania, and afterward in Ohio until his death. He was distinguished as a leader among the Germans. He died in Dayton, Ohio, at the age of eighty-two.

The ministers and people of this conference, as among the Germans generally, have long been recognized as efficient workers, and earnest in the support of the general interests of the Church. Their missionary contributions show a larger average per member, and their patronage of the German periodicals a larger percentage of the membership, than those of the English portion of the Church, and give them in these respects a position above that of their English brethren.

Among the most efficient of living laborers now in the conference are Edward Lorenz, Gottlieb Fritz, C. Streich, and August Schmidt. All of these were born in Germany. Mr. Lorenz was born in 1827; came to America in 1848, became a member of the conference in 1862, serving as a regular itinerant; spent two years, from 1891 to 1893, as presiding elder of the mission in Germany, and on the death of William Mittendorf, in 1895, was elected his successor as editor of the German periodicals. Mr. Fritz, born 1832, came to America in 1851, was licensed to preach in 1859, has served seventeen years as presiding elder, was elected to the General Conference in 1869, and to every conference since except that of 1893. He is an earnest, robust worker for his conference and the Church. Mr. Streich, born in 1839, licensed to preach in 1863, has given thirty-four years of continuous and efficient service to the Ohio German Conference. William Mittendorf, elsewhere mentioned, twenty-two years editor of the German periodicals, a most faithful and useful servant of the Church, dying in 1895, was a member of this conference.

The conference has twenty-nine ministers, all enrolled as itinerants, a lay membership of 2,312, and a Sunday-school enrollment of 3,322.

#### VII. THE AUGLAIZE CONFERENCE.

The Auglaize Conference, for four years called the Maumee, was formed by separation from the Miami. The initial session was held at Pleasant Hill Chapel, in Mercer County, on September 9, 1853, Bishop L. Davis presiding. The charter members, twenty-seven in number, were A. Shingledecker, John Hill, James Spray, George Davis, David Davis, William Miller, Henry Snell, Ira Thompson, L. S. Farber, C. B. Whitley, William Siberry, James Lea, A. F. Miller, Thomas Reed, J. Wilkinson, William Milligan, J. Eby, William Burtch, P. B. Holden, F. B. Hendrix, H. R. Tobey, D. Bolp, A. W. Holden, E. M. Brown, S. L. Downey, G. S. Gibbons, T. J. Babcoke. The lay membership of the conference in the following year was 2,878.

This conference throughout its history has had a career of commendable activity. Unfortunately, some of its most influential men held a decidedly radical attitude, and succeeded in so dividing both ministers and people that when the secession came many of them went with the seceders. Notwithstanding these losses, the conference is well at the front in its activities. It numbers at present fifty-eight ministers, of whom forty-five are itinerant, and 6,531 lay members. Its Sunday-school enrollment is 10,334, showing an unusually large percentage above the church membership, and indicating the activity of its people in that work. Of young people's societies the conference has twenty-seven, with a membership of 1,285.

Among those who entered the conference at various dates since its organization were J. L. Luttrell, E. Coun-

seller, W. E. Bay, R. W. Wilgus, W. Z. Roberts, and J. W. Lower, all of whom have represented the conference in the recent General Conferences. Mr. Luttrell, now deceased, a few years ago wrote and published a history of the Auglaize Conference which has value in preserving many facts in permanent form. The conference has been especially honored in the number of missionaries it has furnished for the foreign field. They are Rev. W. S. Sage, Rev. R. N. West, Rev. and Mrs. Jacob Miller, and Miss Ella Schenck.

#### VIII. THE ROCK RIVER CONFERENCE.

The Rock River Conference was organized on August 19, 1853, at Pine Creek School-house, in Ogle County, Illinois. Bishop L. Davis presided, and the following ministers were present: M. Clifton, A. Church, W. E. Henry, J. Dollarhide, William Dollarhide, S. Fenton, A. B. Frazier, J. Warner, W. H. Haskins, S. Kretzinger, J. Perrine, W. T. Burton, E. L. Church, S. F. Medler, D. S. Richards, J. Hiestand, Asa Coho, J. R. Baumgardner, Jacob Baumgardner, S. Healy—twenty in all, with nine absent. The conference was formed by separation from the Illinois. Its territory embraces all of the northern part of the State of Illinois, extending to the Wisconsin line.

For some years the work in this conference was pushed with much success, when unfortunate divisions arose, the most serious of them growing out of the secret-society question. Some of the ministers were intensely radical, and when the General Conference of 1885 took steps toward amending the Church Constitution, they, with others elsewhere, began to prepare the way for secession. When the secession came, they succeeded in carrying with them a large number of the people. The census of October, 1892, showed that those adhering to the Church had been reduced



to 1,090. A favorable tide, however, soon set in, and in 1896 this number had advanced to 1,471, while the Sunday-school enrollment is 2,494. Its young people's societies include 590 names, or considerably more than one-third of the entire membership. This fact and the Sunday-school enrollment show that a young and fresh life is coming to the front, thus assuring a future vigorous growth. C. Bender and Dr. H. D. Healy were the representatives of this conference in the General Conference of 1889, and Cornelius Wendle, J. Groff, and Mr. D. C. Overholser in that of 1893. Rev. W. M. Weekley, the secretary of the Church-Erection Society, is a member of this conference.

#### IX. THE KENTUCKY CONFERENCE.

At an early day several United Brethren families sought homes in Adair and other counties in Kentucky. Occasional visits were made to them by United Brethren ministers, among these Bishop Newcomer. The first organized societies were formed about 1833 by John M. Blair, of the Indiana Conference, on Green River, in central Kentucky. He was soon joined by William Blair, his brother. They preached in Adair and other counties, and numerous conversions followed. William Traylor and R. T. Leftwich afterward came to their aid.

The work was supplied from the Indiana Conference until 1850, when Bishop Glossbrenner visited it with the view of organizing it into a conference. He appointed a meeting for this purpose in Adair County. Only the Blair brothers were present, but he proceeded with the organization, and the conference was subsequently placed under the care of the Board of Missions. Different ministers from time to time went to this work, among them Jordan Antle and A. L. Best, the latter now of Southern

Missouri Conference. The work failed through many years to get a strong hold upon the regard of the people on account of the pronounced attitude of the Church on the subject of slavery, the cause which operated widely in the South with a similar result. There are at present connected with this conference about twenty-five organized societies, with about twenty ministers. Among these are found the names of John Roe, Thomas Hadley, William M. Dickens, John W. Malone, T. J. Gibson, and H. B. James. The conference still remains as a mission field.

## CHAPTER III

### CONFERENCES ORGANIZED SINCE 1853

#### I. THE ERIE CONFERENCE.

THE original Erie Conference, as formed by the General Conference of 1853, was organized in the fall of that year. The General Conference of 1861 divided the conference, and the present body retaining the name of Erie Conference was organized at Harbor Creek, Erie County, Pennsylvania, on October 16, 1862, Bishop Edwards presiding. The territory covered by the conference is northwestern Pennsylvania and western New York. The ministers present at this organization, thirty-two in number, were as follows: W. Rittenhouse, W. Cadman, G. W. Hill, J. Barnard, B. Haak, G. W. Sleeper, J. W. Clark, J. Hill, O. Badgley, D. Bolster, J. L. Chapin, E. B. Torrey, L. L. Hager, J. L. Range, G. W. Franklin, A. Brooks, H. C. Howard, W. Bates, G. Smith, J. G. Erb, G. E. Wellman, E. Benson, W. McIntyre, F. H. Herrick, S. H. Smith, R. W. Braddock, G. A. Peters, D. Gray, J. W. Hoyt, I. Bennehoff, J. McFadden, and H. Bedow. The following, also members, were not present: L. McIntyre, W. D. Ellis, A. Holman, W. R. King, I. N. Miller, and N. Martin.

A number of these men are still in the active service, and other efficient men have been added. Among these are Prof. R. J. White, principal of Sugar Grove Seminary since its founding in 1884, spoken of elsewhere, E. Smith, P. E. Smith, A. Brunson, M. D. M. Altice, O. J. Gage. L. L. Hager, one of the early members, has written and

published two volumes of pleasant poems on religious and miscellaneous subjects.

The Erie Conference has achieved a noble record of service, and holds its place among the progressive conferences of the Church. The ministers have been united and loyal, and the radicalism which proved so disastrous in many places made here no appreciable impression. Within late years an increased effort has been made to occupy the cities and larger towns, and there are now flourishing churches in Buffalo, Erie, Pleasantville, Bradford, and other places. The seminary also is receiving growing attention. The number of ministers in the conference is seventy-seven, of whom sixty-three are itinerant. The general membership is 3,861. The Sunday-school enrollment is 6,702, showing a very unusual percentage above the church membership.

## II. THE OREGON CONFERENCE.

Of the organization of this pioneer conference of the Pacific Coast, in 1855, under the courageous leadership of those enthusiastic and devoted men, T. J. Connor, and J. Kenoyer, the reader has seen an account.<sup>1</sup> Of the struggles of the conference, never large in numbers, to build a college, an account has also been given. For many years the preachers and people worked in good hope, looking for the day of larger things. In time, however, the conference became subject to the greatest harm through the extreme radicalism of some in high places. So thoroughly had the spirit of disloyalty been encouraged among the people that when the final crisis came, about one-half of the preachers and people went with the secession. Since then the contention over the college property has been a source of much trouble, though,

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 429, 430.



happily, now finally settled in favor of the Church. The conference now numbers twenty ministers, and 1,114 in the laity. Among its present most influential ministers are J. R. Parker, B. E. Emrick, P. C. Hetzler, and C. C. Bell. George Sickafoose spent a number of years in the conference, but recently returned to the East.

### III. THE ONTARIO CONFERENCE.

The reader has already seen that the earliest United Brethren ministers who visited Canada were Jacob Erb, afterward bishop, and J. Christian Smith. They were both at the time members of the original or Hagerstown Conference. This visit was made in 1825, and was undertaken on their own account. They preached extensively, scattering the seed of the word by the way, and years afterward some of the fruits of their labor remained. Two years later, in 1827, Mr. Erb was appointed to what was then called the New York Mission, the territory included being western New York. After this Mr. Erb made occasional visits to this seat of his labors, and in 1853 he again crossed over into Canada.

About this time Israel Sloane was sent to Canada by the Board of Missions, which had then been organized, and a few years later, in 1856, the Canada, now Ontario, Conference, was formed, with six ministers and one hundred and fifty-two members. The place of meeting was Beverly Chapel, in Sheffield, Bishop Glossbrenner presiding. Five of the names were as follows: Israel Sloane, J. A. Cornell, C. Moore, A. Cornell, and A. B. Sherk. All these men are deceased. The present number of the ministers is twenty-one, of whom twelve are in the itinerancy. Some among these are J. P. Cowling, I. W. Groh, George H. Backus, J. F. Durkee, J. Mager. The lay membership of the conference is 1,426; the Sunday-

school enrollment, 2,195. The large percentage of the Sunday-school membership over that of the church gives good promise of a larger future. This conference, with others, suffered much from the effects of ultra-radicalism. The title to all its church property being now permanently settled, the opportunities for future success will be greatly enlarged.

#### IV. THE PARKERSBURG CONFERENCE.

Men of heroic mold were they who in extending the work of the Virginia Conference went westward and set up the banners of the Church in the mountainous regions of western Virginia. The first of these pioneer preachers was Moses Michael, who came into what is now West Virginia in May, 1836. He began preaching in Mason County, on the Ohio River. On August 20, 1837, he organized the first church. Jacob Rhinehart and Henry Jones joined Mr. Michael, and the work was soon extended into other counties. Until the separate organization of the Parkersburg Conference other ministers were sent over from the Virginia, as presiding elders, circuit preachers, or missionaries, to build up the work. Among these were Dr. George W. Statton, Dr. Z. Warner, J. W. Perry, J. Bachtel, H. Lower, and I. K. Statton. Some of these recrossed the mountains at different times to serve the various charges. Others remained, thus becoming the nucleus of the future conference.

The conference was organized as a separate body in 1858, at Centerville, in Tyler County, Bishop Glossbrenner presiding. The charter members were J. Bachtel, Z. Warner, J. W. Perry, J. W. Miles, L. Hess, William James, Eli Martin, John P. White, and D. Engle—nine in all. Of these original members only one now remains, J. W. Miles, far advanced in years. In later years were added

the names of J. L. Hensley, M.D., S. J. Graham, E. Harper, E. Stuttler, and George W. Hensley. Mr. Bachtel had been an influential member of the Virginia Conference, being closely associated with Bishop Markwood. Dr. Warner, for many years a leading figure in the General Conference, and greatly honored in his own conference, has been elsewhere spoken of. J. W. Perry, after rendering long and distinguished service, died a little over a year ago, aged about seventy. Dr. J. L. Hensley retired a few years ago from regular itinerant work; he now resides at Marion, Ohio, gives much attention to temperance and other reforms, and was a few years ago elected to the Ohio legislature. W. M. Weekley, now of the Rock River Conference, and church-erection secretary, gave twenty years of service to this conference.

The field covered by the Parkersburg Conference is one of the most rugged and difficult to travel in the entire Church. But its men are hardy, courageous, and devoted, and they win success. The conference has eighty-seven ministers, and a general membership of 11,400, being surpassed in this respect only by the Allegheny Conference. The Sunday-school enrollment is 13,683.

#### V. THE KANSAS CONFERENCE.

The Kansas Conference was organized as early as 1857. Its first years were those of the border-ruffianism which sought, by terrorism and ruthless murder, to force the institution of slavery upon the settlers of the then new Territory. In common with others who stood for freedom and for their rights as citizens, our people experienced the red baptism of blood. Their pronounced antislavery sentiments made them especially the objects of suspicion and the targets of murderous assault.

The earliest United Brethren minister in Kansas was

W. A. Cardwell, of the White River Conference, who settled near Lecompton in 1855. Here he established a society, and here the first United Brethren church was built. After him came Samuel S. Snyder, of the Allegheny Conference, of whose death, in 1861, by the hands of the raiders, mention has been made. In 1857 came J. S. Gingerich, also of the Allegheny Conference. Soon after, these were joined by Josiah Terrell and William Huffman, father of Dr. G. M. Huffman, both of the White River Conference. These, with several others who joined them, nine in all, assembled at the house of Mr. Snyder, near Lawrence, on October 30, 1857, where they organized the Kansas Conference. Bishop Edwards was present, and presided. Among those who came later are found the names of Samuel Kretzinger, H. M. Green, E. Shepherd, and Solomon Weaver. A number of these pioneers have died. Huffman and Gingerich, both quite aged, are living, the latter at Pasadena, California. Among those best known in the conference now are Dr. G. M. Huffman, Dr. J. H. Snyder, J. R. Meredith, E. B. Slade, F. R. Mitchell, Dr. C. M. Brooke, S. C. Coblentz, E. Shepherd, J. H. Bonebrake, and J. B. Deever. Dr. H. D. Healy, earlier a member of this conference, is now connected with the Rock River. R. Loggan, a number of years a prominent member, removed to Oregon, where he went with the seceders.

It is difficult now, after the lapse of more than a third of a century, to realize the hardships and perils these pioneer preachers were called upon to endure. Some of them, as many in the Virginias, literally passed through fire, being often waylaid and shot at by assassins, had their houses broken into, and were themselves dragged into prison. Their persecutors sought to intimidate them by threats and violence, and by repeated assaults to drive



them out of the country. But they were brave men, after the true apostolic type, and continued to preach in the presence of armed foes, often themselves guarded by rifles in the hands of those who came to hear. Much of this experience occurred before the actual outbreak of the War, between the time of their organization and 1861.

The conference has yielded freely of its ministers and people for the formation of other conferences, and now numbers fifty preachers, thirty-two of whom are itinerant, with 4,151 in the laity.

#### VI. THE MINNESOTA CONFERENCE.

In the fall of 1854 Rev. Edmund Clow removed from Carroll County, Illinois, to Pine Creek Valley, in Winona County, Minnesota. Finding the people scattered about as sheep having no shepherd, he began at once to preach the word, and good results immediately followed. In the autumn of 1855 he attended the Rock River Conference, reported his work, joined the conference, was ordained by Bishop Edwards, and sent back to his field, which was recognized as Pine Creek Mission.

The continued labors of Mr. Clow were greatly blessed, and among his converts in the winter of 1856-57 was M. L. Tibbetts, who at once began to declare the gospel of Christ. The Board of Missions sent to this field, in 1855, J. W. Fulkerson, who at once began work. Others also came, and when the Minnesota Conference was organized, in the fall of 1857, by Bishop L. Davis, there were present these three, with John Haney and John Murrell. Mr. Fulkerson was made presiding elder, with a mission to serve, and the rest were each appointed to missions.

Later came I. L. Buchwalter, J. J. Vaughn, N. E. Gardner, S. D. Kemerer, O. A. Phillips, and J. T. Allaman, all

of them faithful toilers in the Lord's field. The names of all of these became well known. Some of them have removed to other conferences and some are with the Master. Clow, Fulkerson, Tibbetts, and Haney are living, and remain with the conference. They are all far advanced in years, and have each seen much of wearing pioneer experience, traveling over long distances where there were no roads, and often exposed to all the force of high winds and low temperatures. Among other names now familiar in the working forces of the conference are N. S. Hankins, U. A. Cook, E. J. Reed, and I. N. Cain, missionary to Africa.

The ministers of this conference, as of many others, in all the years until now found themselves practically debarred, by the restrictive legislation of the Church, from the cities and larger towns, and the fruits of their revivals were frequently gathered by other denominations. Hence their work has not reached the proportions to which the amount of labor expended was fairly entitled. But the ministers are men of courage, and a larger future is before them.

#### VII. THE MISSOURI CONFERENCE.

The first effort to establish the United Brethren Church in Missouri was made in 1853, Henry Kumler, Jun., being in that year sent by the Board of Missions into the southwestern part of the State. He was soon joined by J. Terrell and others, and in 1854 a conference was held, Bishop Edwards presiding. About this time the border war was begun by the abettors of slavery, who sought to force the dark institution across the line into Kansas. During the years of intense excitement which followed, the small United Brethren societies made little progress, and the conferences ceased to be held.

Meanwhile, the Des Moines Conference was extending

its work across into the northern part of Missouri, and on October 18, 1858, the preachers of that conference laboring in Missouri convened in a regular conference at Atlanta, in Macon County. Bishop Edwards was present and organized the conference. Among the preachers present are found the names of Moses Michael, who was elected presiding elder, and W. P. Shanklin, John Osborn, J. Mayfield, G. H. Busby, J. H. McVey, Thomas Perkins, W. H. Burns, J. T. Timmons, Benjamin Wade, Jabez Harrison, and Alpheus Minear. This conference was considered a reorganization of the work in Missouri, in a different locality, and was called the Missouri Conference. The lay membership reported at this time was 348. At the second session, held in the spring of 1850, this number had increased to 809.

Other names of ministers were soon added, as E. W. Carpenter, D. E. Statton, A. W. Geeslin, D. A. Beauchamp, William Beauchamp, Lee Fisher, A. D. Thomas, J. Herbert, and O. P. Louthan. Of these early members of the conference a number have died. Geeslin and Thomas went with the radicals. Among those now best known in the conference are U. P. Wardrip, President W. S. Reese, of York College, U. O. Deputy, Joseph Bays, W. O. Wallace, S. T. Wallace, A. M. Scovill, M. Bratcher, and I. W. McRae. President F. A. Z. Kumler, of Avalon College, elsewhere spoken of, is a layman in this conference. The conference numbers thirty-seven preachers and 3,212 in the laity, with a Sunday-school enrollment of 3,413 and a young people's membership of 651.

#### VIII. THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE.

The earliest pioneer of the missionary work in Wisconsin seems to have been G. G. Nickey, a man of quiet bearing, whose presence was often seen in the General Conferences

of other years. Mr. Lawrence in his history says that the first society was organized by James Davis, of whom he speaks as "prominent and most beloved among" the early missionaries. His name, however, does not appear with those who were present at the organization. These missionaries had gone across into Wisconsin from Illinois. Their work attracted the attention of the General Conference of 1857, and that body directed that it be formed into a new conference. The organization was accordingly effected, the first session being held at Rutland, in Dane County, on September, 16, 1858, Bishop L. Davis presiding. In the list of appointments to charges the names of twenty ministers appear, with G. G. Nickey and S. L. Eldred as presiding elders. The other names are S. C. Zuck, S. Sutton, J. W. Reed, J. Haskins, E. S. Bunce, J. Nichols, S. Knox, F. Outcalt, R. Powell, N. Smith, G. Kite, W. W. Simpkins, B. Howard, D. Harrington, E. W. Canfield, J. Payne, J. B. L. Winter, R. Crozier. Five hundred and fifty-four members were reported. This vigorous young conference grew rapidly, and in 1861 it was divided, the southern portion retaining the name Wisconsin, and the remainder becoming the Fox River Conference. The two bodies have since been reunited.

Many of the older members of the General Conferences will remember the presence of Nickey, Sutton, Eldred, and Reed in the sessions of that body. Sutton was a frequent contributor to the columns of the *Religious Telescope* thirty years ago. Reed, now well up in years, still remains. Among the younger men who have acquired prominence are A. J. Hood, twice in the General Conference, seven years presiding elder, A. D. Whitney, a number of years elder, three times in the General Conference, and J. H. Richards, a graduate of Union Biblical Seminary, and member of the General Conference of 1893. The confer-



ence at the present time numbers thirty-five ministers, of whom thirty-one are itinerants, and in the laity 2,070. Its Sunday-school enrollment is 2,839; its young people's societies have 776 names.

#### IX. THE CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE.

In the year 1858 Israel Sloane, whose work as a missionary in Canada had been blessed with signal success, volunteered to go, at his own expense, to the Pacific Coast, and open a mission in California. The divine blessing attended his preaching, and in 1861 the General Conference recognized his work by directing the organization of a conference in the Golden State, and also by electing Daniel Shuck as bishop for the work on the coast. The reader has seen that because of the War breaking out Bishop Shuck was greatly delayed in reaching his field. Meanwhile, Mr. Sloane was joined by other ministers, and in September, 1862, an informal conference was held. The first regular conference, from which the organization is dated, was held in 1864, after the arrival of Bishop Shuck.

Among the early laborers in the conference, in addition to Mr. Sloane and Bishop Shuck, were Nelson Hubbard, J. Ackerson, J. W. Harrow, and C. W. Gillett, the last named still surviving. Among those now best known in the work are J. L. Field, T. J. Bauder, J. S. Pitman, Francis Fisher, A. G. Wright, and D. S. Shiflett. Mr. Pitman is pastor of the church in Los Angeles, for the church building of which the young people's societies are contributing money. Other churches are located at Sacramento, Riverside, Woodbridge, Gridley, and other points. San Joaquin Valley College has been elsewhere spoken of.

The Church in California suffered seriously during the

protracted anti-secret-society agitation. Its way of success in the cities and larger towns, as in many places elsewhere, was effectually barred. Some of its ministers and members, less in proportion than in some other conferences, went with the seceders. With this trouble happily ended, the conference has before it a freer field.

#### X. THE DES MOINES CONFERENCE.

The original Des Moines Conference was formed by separation from the Iowa Conference in the year 1853. In that division the northern portion of the conference retained the name of Iowa, and the southern part became the Des Moines, taking its name from the Des Moines River. This conference rapidly pushed its work westward, and in 1861 it was, in turn, divided, forming the East Des Moines and West Des Moines conferences. Thus their history flowed on in two names until, by the act of the General Conference of 1889, the East Des Moines was again united with the Iowa Conference. This union left two conferences in the State of Iowa, with the dividing line running north and south, instead of east and west as at the first. The West Des Moines now, by the same act of the General Conference, dropped the prefix West, and took the original name Des Moines. Its territory is the western half of the State.

The first separate session of the West Des Moines (now Des Moines) Conference, after the division of 1861, was held at Panora, Guthrie County, on September 12, 1862, Bishop Markwood presiding. Fourteen ministers attended this conference, as follows: William G. Eckles, R. Loggan, J. Simpson, E. Flaugh, S. Brooks, J. Burns, R. Armstrong, J. I. Baber, G. P. Fisher, J. A. Kenaston, William Jacobs, J. M. Dosh, J. B. Hamilton, and A. Randall. Four others joined at this session: J. E. Ham, M. S. Dickey, A. N.

Baker, and William Jenkins. Twenty-two members were absent, among whom were Ira B. Ryan and J. B. Carr. Only three of the original members, William Jacobs, J. Simpson, and J. B. Carr, are now living. The conference had seventeen charges and thirteen itinerants. Coöperation and support for Western College were pledged at this first session.

Among other ministers in the Des Moines Conference, as the years were passing, were found the names of L. S. Grove, John and W. S. De Moss, R. Thrasher, A. H. Mitchell, A. Schwimley (now in Colorado), D. S. Shiflett (now in California), A. Corbin, and others who became well known. For many years past George Miller, D.D., has stood as the recognized head of the conference. Dr. Miller was born in Ohio in 1837, became a minister in the Auglaize Conference, transferred to West Des Moines (now Des Moines) in 1871; has been honored by his brethren with the office of presiding elder for twenty-four consecutive years, was elected to the General Conference of 1877, and to each session since, has long been a member of several of the general church boards, as well as of the conference boards, proving himself in these various relations one of the most practical and useful men of the Church. Others in this conference who have come well to the front are L. H. Bufkin, G. O. Porter, W. F. Cronk, and E. W. Curtis. The last named has been for some years pastor of the church in East Des Moines, and renders a wider service as editor of the *Parish Outlook*.

The Des Moines Conference has long recognized the right of women to proclaim the gospel of Christ, and is ready to concede their right to other responsible positions. Mrs. Elizabeth De Moss, better known afterward as Mrs. Funkhouser, and Phebe Benton were among them as highly esteemed laborers. The former was the mother of the De Moss brothers, and coöperated with

them effectually in the work of the gospel. She was also the grandmother of Mrs. S. J. Staves, one of the first two woman delegates in the General Conference in the Church, in the session of 1893, at Dayton, Ohio, her associate in this conference being Mrs. Mattie A. Brewer, of the Lower Wabash Conference.

#### XI. THE MICHIGAN CONFERENCE.

This conference was organized in the year 1862 at Matherton, Ionia County, Michigan, with sixteen members, namely, James Nixon, W. S. Titus, J. B. Parmelee, B. Hamp, J. Jacobs, G. C. Fox, W. H. Stone, J. Berry, J. Myers, H. Rathbun, H. T. Barnaby, J. Rider, A. Lee, D. Strayer, G. S. Lake, and J. Warner. Its growth for some years was rapid, and in 1877 it was divided, forming the North Michigan. Later on, the bright promise began to be clouded through the intensity of the anti-secret-society agitation, a condition which grew worse when the General Conference adopted measures providing for revision. Several of its leading men were among the foremost in the Church in the radical movement, one of the number winning a bishop's seat in the radical church. With these local conditions, and the church property becoming involved in lawsuits, growth naturally ceased. The property question having at last been put in better form by the courts, it may be hoped that a brighter future lies ahead.

The conference has a number of devoted and hard-working men, who have the welfare of the Church at heart. Foremost among these is W. N. Breidenstine, a brave soldier of the War, who carries a wound received at the battle of Petersburg in 1864. He was ordained by Bishop Edwards in 1871, and has continued in the active ministry since, serving as presiding elder for eight



years, and was in the General Conference of 1893. Toiling with his brethren in the conference faithfully under many discouragements, he looks to the better reward to come. He is now serving as conference missionary organizer, with his residence at Grand Rapids. B. H. Mowers is another of the earnest toilers in this conference. Ordained to the ministry in 1871, he has served the conference as pastor and presiding elder, and was in the General Conferences of 1885 and 1893. G. S. Lake was for a number of years an efficient worker in the Michigan Conference. James Carter, a man of much worth, remembered by many of the older members of the General Conferences, went to his final reward in November, 1878.

Chief among those who went out of this conference and the Church with the radical secession were H. T. Barnaby, W. S. Titus, and B. Hamp. Mr. Barnaby and Mr. Titus for many years exerted considerable influence in the General Conference.

## XII. THE CENTRAL ILLINOIS CONFERENCE.

The Central Illinois Conference was formed by separation from the Illinois Conference, on September 28, 1865, the initial session being held in the city of Decatur, Illinois, Bishop Weaver presiding. The following names were enrolled: M. Ambrose, L. D. Ambrose, G. Wenner, A. L. Best, R. M. Parks, L. M. Robinson, W. Crandall, H. T. Van Gordon, M. T. Chew, J. Herbert, H. Hilbish, A. A. Shesler, J. W. Elliott, J. I. Robinson, I. Fink, I. W. Mason, S. P. Hoy, J. C. Ross, J. W. Fisher, A. B. Powell, D. Folk, John Hoobler, G. P. Fisher, F. Gorsline, H. Stoddard, I. Blake, W. F. Bishop, S. Swick, G. M. Freese, L. S. Cornell, G. W. Hall.

This conference entered into its work with good hope,

but failing to enter the larger towns and cities, and to reach many other citizens of the best classes, largely through the limitations imposed by the rigid anti-secret-society legislation, much of the best opportunity for success was missed. A member of the conference in a letter very fitly says: "A rich soil, enterprising farmers and business men, fine railroad facilities and good markets, excellent free schools and colleges, and a generally intelligent people, had we put ourselves into true relations to the best of them we could have entered a most inviting field for building up a first-class conference." With the changed legislative conditions of the Church, the ministers in this field are now hoping for a brighter and larger future. Among its newer and recently added working forces are found a number of devoted and able preachers and pastors, among whom are L. Field, P. H. Wagner, D. O. Giffin, Z. T. Hatfield, J. A. F. King, H. T. Athey, and R. H. Beck. The conference, according to the latest statistics, has a membership of thirty-six ministers, with 3,498 in the laity and 4,324 in its Sunday schools.

### XIII. THE COLUMBIA RIVER CONFERENCE.

The Columbia River Conference, originally named the Cascade, and then the Walla Walla, is located in eastern Oregon, Washington, and northwestern Idaho. It was formed by separation from the Oregon Conference, and was organized in September, 1865. Bishop D. Shuck presided at the session. The early leaders in the conference, as in the original work in Oregon, were T. J. Connor and J. Kenoyer. A number of the pioneers are living, and remain at their post in the ministry and Church. Kenoyer, however, went off with the radicals. The conference at the present time has a ministerial membership of twenty-three, some of the best known among them

being G. W. Sickafoose, Homer Gallaher, J. J. Gallaher, and W. R. Lloyd. The conference has a general membership of 1,118, with 951 in its Sunday schools, and 290 in its young people's societies. The conference has sought to encourage church education, but the experiment with Washington Seminary, at Huntsville, has resulted in embarrassment, the church membership being insufficient to provide the requisite financial support.

#### XIV. THE TENNESSEE CONFERENCE.

In the year 1856 John Ruebush, of the Virginia Conference, was appointed by the Board of Missions to visit east Tennessee. He at once began preaching, and, with the divine blessing attending his word, considerable numbers were converted. He formed several societies, established a number of regular appointments, and began also the work of church building. With the breaking out of the War the work was much hindered, and for a time suspended. Later Mr. Ruebush resumed his preaching, and A. E. Evans and D. A. Beauchamp came to his help. In 1866 Bishop Glossbrenner met these three men in Otterbein Chapel, Greene County, Tennessee, and organized the first formal conference. Enos Keezel and R. J. Bishop were received as licentiates. J. W. Bowen was added in 1868, and J. A. Small in 1869. Jonathan Bales and his wife were the first to join the United Brethren Church in Tennessee. Other ministers, as time passed, were added, as Joseph Waldorf, Edwin Horner, Richard Owen, and later J. K. and Mrs. A. L. Billheimer. In 1877 the conference founded Edwards Academy, at Greenville, Tennessee. In 1881 it was removed to White Pine, where it is just now entering upon a larger prosperity. An account of the institution has been given elsewhere in this volume.

About two years ago a movement which had been for some time in process of development began to take definite form, resulting in considerable additions both of ministers and laymen to the United Brethren Church. The greater number of these came from the Methodist Episcopal Church, some from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and a few from other denominations. Those coming from the Methodist churches were attracted chiefly by the milder form of episcopal government in the United Brethren Church. There was for them no possible inducement in material or worldly considerations. They could not look for larger salaries, or easier fields of labor, or lighter sacrifices, nor was the prospect of official promotion better than in the churches from which they came. Nor could they bring with them any of the church-houses or other property which they had aided in building. No thought or hope of this kind was entertained; much less was any effort made to do so. Influenced by principle alone, and in the face of present loss, they chose to cast in their lot with us, and they have addressed themselves earnestly to the work in their new relations. About twenty-five ministers in all, with a considerable number of members, have thus connected themselves with the United Brethren. Among the leading ministers in the movement are Dr. T. C. Carter, Rev. W. L. Richardson, J. D. Droke, and others. They have been given a cordial welcome by the United Brethren Church, not in any spirit of proselytism, for no proselyting was done, nor from any desire to reap where others have sown, but with an open heart and door to receive any persons who love our common Lord and desire to cast their lot with us.

The latest statistics of the Tennessee Conference show a membership of twenty-three itinerants and the same number of local ministers, and 1,857 communicants. The



Sunday-school enrollment is 2,105. Two new conferences have also been formed within the past two years, which are to be spoken of farther on.

#### XV. THE EAST GERMAN CONFERENCE.

The East German Conference was formed by separation from the East Pennsylvania. Its first separate session was held March 4, 1870, Bishop Weaver presiding, assisted by Bishops Glossbrenner and Dickson. The names of twenty-eight ministers were enrolled, as follows: John Binckley, J. W. Boughton, John G. Clair, L. W. Craumer, J. B. Daugherty, D. S. Early, S. Etter, L. Fleisher, J. D. A. Garman, H. H. Gelbach, H. E. Hachman, D. Hoffman, J. W. Kunkel, Job Light, John Lowery, J. H. Mark, John Meyer, S. V. Mohn, Simon Noll, J. Runk, J. Ruhl, Jacob Schropp, James Shoop, A. Steigerwald, G. Stoll, D. Strickler, Gideon Weidman, Joseph Young.

Gelbach, Hoffman, and Daugherty were regarded as among the leaders of this conference in its earlier years. The first two have died, and Daugherty has returned to the East Pennsylvania Conference. Hoffman was ordained a minister in 1851, and gave thirty-seven years of faithful labor to the ministry. Gelbach was a man of impressive personal presence, an able preacher and successful winner of souls. He died in 1886. Job Light was a man of slight figure, but a strong and successful preacher, whether serving as presiding elder or as a pastor. He died suddenly in 1889 while conducting an extensive revival in his church in Reading. Henry Schropp and John Doerkson were each men of power and greatly esteemed. Doerkson, born in Germany, was a man of superior culture, young and progressive in spirit, and a fresh, vigorous preacher. Jacob Fritz, ordained in 1857, preached for thirty-eight years, leaving a good record of industry and devotion.

The East German Conference has now sixty-four preachers, of whom forty-nine are in the itinerancy. Its general membership is 6,552. Of these nearly one-half are enrolled in the young people's societies, the number being 3,107. Its Sunday-school enrollment is similarly large, being 10,971. These facts indicate a large promise for the future of the conference. Among the present active force in the conference are still found some of those who assisted in the organization, as Mark, Shoop, Runk, and Noll, the last now old, and earlier a very successful evangelist. Among the younger men are W. H. Uhler, C. S. Miller, A. Graul, and S. M. Hummel. The conference, as a body, possesses the stanch elements requisite for solid and durable work.

#### XVI. THE NEOSHO CONFERENCE.

The Neosho Conference, spread out over the fertile fields of the Neosho Valley, is the fair daughter of the Kansas Conference. Its first separate session was held on April 16, 1870, Bishop Dickson presiding. The place of meeting was Greeley, in Anderson County, Kansas. The names of nineteen ministers were enrolled, and there were three hundred and thirty-nine in the general membership. The ministers were as follows: J. W. Arnold, S. E. Cormany, S. G. Elliott, A. P. Floyd, William James, John Osborn, A. Prescott, J. Riley, W. B. Walker, John Buckmaster, J. D. England, J. R. Evans, J. S. Gingerich, J. Morehead, J. Picket, J. R. Reed, J. F. Statton, William Folk, D. Wenrich.

Among the early company of laborers, Gingerich, Evans, Wenrich, Riley, and James are remembered as natural leaders. Gingerich possessed the genuine pioneer spirit. Starting from the East early in life, his name has appeared at different times in connection with the Western conferences. He now waits, as the reader has seen, in advanced

old age, in a city near the western ocean, for the Master's final call. Among other men who have come well to the front are J. K. Spencer, G. H. Hinton, J. R. Chambers, C. H. Jones, N. L. Vezie, J. C. Ross. J. R. Evans, of this conference, was a member of the Church Commission on revision of the Constitution and Confession of Faith.

This conference has made fine progress in advancing its work. It now has forty-eight ministers, of whom thirty-four are in the itinerancy. Its enrolled membership is 3,470. There are forty-two young people's societies, with a membership of 1,243, and 4,239 are in its Sunday schools. The conference gives fine promise of a greatly enlarged future.

#### XVII. THE ELKHORN AND DAKOTA CONFERENCE.

In 1871 a mission conference was organized in South Dakota and named the Dakota Conference, and in 1882 the Elkhorn Conference was formed in northeast Nebraska. In 1885 these two bodies were united, forming the Elkhorn and Dakota Conference. Bishop Kephart presided at the session. The roll of ministers of the two conferences embraced thirty-one names, and there were six hundred and forty in the laity. Among the ministers were D. D. Weimer, E. R. Richmond, W. H. Post, T. P. Brown, W. H. Burns, E. D. Cowles, J. W. Tucker, and N. B. Moore.

This conference became one of the true mission fields of the Church, and other ministers soon entered upon its work, as S. W. Koontz, of the Minnesota Conference, L. T. John, of the Iowa, and J. E. Leonard, of the St. Joseph. Judge J. W. Tucker was equally at home in the pulpit, on the stump, and as attorney for the Indians in those regions. Mr. Weimer, deceased, is remembered as one of the bravest of men in facing the pitiless storms of the prairies, in meeting his appointments as presiding elder.

Mr. Richmond was blind. His wife accompanied him, and read for him the Scriptures and other books. She was inspired to a special zeal by this service, and after his decease was licensed as a preacher in the conference. His frequent rendering of "Beulah Land" is remembered as peculiarly pathetic and beautiful.

The work in this conference, as in many others, has perhaps in too large proportion been given to the rural districts, performing indeed a great service to many who otherwise would be neglected, but failing to build up the Church rapidly into strength. All the hardships peculiar to new countries the ministers have had to meet, but they have toiled in hope, and the harvest will follow.

#### XVIII. THE COLORADO CONFERENCE.

The Colorado Conference was organized on April 15, 1872, by Bishop Dickson. Only three names were enrolled on the conference list, namely William H. McCormick, St. Clair Ross, and A. Hartzell. Other names were soon added, and others further on. Among these were L. S. Cornell, D.D., E. J. Lamb, J. W. Zimmerman, A. Schwimley, A. Griffith, J. P. Wilson, C. M. Dilly, and others. Several of these, after many years of earnest service, remain in the active work of the conference. McCormick, one of the original three, Lamb, Zimmerman, and Schwimley hold foremost places among their brethren. It is to be regretted that Ross and Hartzell thought it best to cast their lot with the radicals. Mr. Ross was sent by the Board of Missions to Colorado in 1869. He died in October of 1896. His brothers, J. C. and Daniel J. B. Ross, are ministers in the Neosho Conference. Hartzell also is dead. Dr. Cornell, for over twenty years in active service, resides in Denver, much esteemed by his



brethren. Rufus and Mrs. Clark, whose names stand in perpetual honor, in connection with the training school in Africa, are lay members of the Church at Smith's Chapel, Denver.

The conference has wisely planted its work in the towns and cities, and has churches at Denver, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Berthoud, Left Hand, St. Vrain, and Loveland.

#### XIX. THE EAST NEBRASKA CONFERENCE.

In the year 1860 several United Brethren families found homes near the village of Plattsmouth, near the mouth of the river Platte. In 1864 William H. Shepherd and R. Loggan located in the neighborhood, and regular preaching was provided for. In the same year W. P. Caldwell and E. J. Lamb, zealous laymen from Iowa, found homes on Swan Creek, in Saline County. They began to hold prayer-meetings, and before very long were regularly licensed preachers. In 1866 E. W. Johnson settled in Seward County, and at once began preaching. In 1870 S. Austin, of the Illinois Conference, located in York County, and soon began successful work. Thus were additions made from time to time, until in the year 1873 there were fourteen ministers, with seventy-four appointments, and about fifty organized classes, and 841 members. In that year, on October 30, Bishop Glossbrenner visited them, and organized the Nebraska Conference. The ministers enrolled in the membership were W. P. Caldwell, S. Austin, E. W. Johnson, W. H. Shepherd, H. L. Spofford, Ives Marks, J. McDougal, H. Ackaret, J. M. Ward, P. E. Elliott, W. S. Spooner, I. N. Martin, I. Cole, and S. Fenton.

Thus organized, these ministers in a spirit of broad hopefulness sowed their seed and thrust their sickles into the harvest, so that in 1878, five years after the organi-

zation, the membership had grown to 2,394, and the number of ministers to about fifty. The work had extended westward, and it was deemed advisable to divide the conference, and the East and West Nebraska conferences were formed. Thirty-three ministers remained with the East Nebraska, among whom were the veteran founders of the conference, Simeon Austin, who afterward joined the radicals, William P. Caldwell, and E. W. Johnson. Four licentiates were received, and the conference started on its new mission with thirty-seven ministers. The conference has been active in building churches and parsonages, though many of its organized societies are still without churches. It has gathered a membership of 4,012, with forty-eight ministers, of whom thirty-nine are in the itinerancy. It has forty-three young people's societies, with a membership of 1,659; its Sunday schools have an enrollment of 4,327. The conference suffered considerably from the radical movement, but its losses are much more than made up.

#### XX. THE WEST NEBRASKA CONFERENCE.

The history of the founding of the Church in Nebraska belongs to the East and the West conferences alike. In the spirit of the truest missionaries the pioneer preachers did their work, amid the usual difficulties pertaining to pioneer life, but meeting with much cheering success. The final session of the original Nebraska Conference was held at Fairbury, in Jefferson County, on August 21, 1878, Bishop Wright presiding. The ministers who had pushed farther into the newer fields, and others who elected to go with them, were as follows: Isaac Belknap, Charles G. Bowers, Jacob Bremser, John J. Haskins, Charles C. Kellogg, Edmond L. Kenoyer, Obadiah Knepper, John McDougal, I. N. Martin, Thomas J. Parvin, William S.

Spooner, John W. Ward, S. C. Abbott, Byron M. Allen, David Edgerton, J. H. Fee, Josiah D. Fye, John T. Squiers, and George Fembers. The number in the laity falling to West Nebraska Conference was 605. Numerous changes have taken place in the ministerial list since the formation, in 1878, by removals and deaths, with a few withdrawals to the radicals, while new men have from time to time come in. Among those now holding prominent recognition in the conference are H. W. Trueblood, D.D., T. B. Cannon, J. J. Smith, C. H. Polhemus, and others.

This conference early entered the educational field, founding Gibbon Collegiate Institute, but transferring its interest afterward to York College, as elsewhere spoken of. The conference has advanced in general membership to 2,235, with thirty-six ministers. It has twenty-four young people's societies, enrolling 701 members, and about 3,400 scholars and teachers enrolled in its Sunday schools, a number over fifty per cent. larger than that of the church membership. This fact gives good promise of future increase in the Church.

#### XXI. THE NORTH MICHIGAN CONFERENCE.

The North Michigan Conference was formed by separation from the Michigan Conference, at a session held in Waterloo, Michigan, September 6, 1877. Bishop Weaver presided. The names of seventeen ministers were enrolled, some of whom were A. Rossman, J. Beechtler, W. T. Baldwin, H. H. Maynard, J. A. F. King, and G. A. Bowles.

The field occupied by the conference was strictly missionary ground, with all the usual attendant conditions. It received such support as the Missionary Board was able to give, and for some years the work prospered encouragingly. But, unfortunately for its steady prosperity, the

conference became, during the period of the radical troubles, a theater of special disturbance. The parent conference, the Michigan, had long been dominated by men of extreme radical principles, and their influence, some of them becoming members of the North Michigan, gave to this conference the same general character as that of the Michigan. As a consequence, when the secession of 1889 occurred, a considerable number of ministers went with the radicals, carrying with them a proportionate number of the laity, in some instances nearly entire congregations, together with the houses they occupied. The litigations growing out of these conditions have been elsewhere referred to.

The disintegration thus wrought in this conference proved greatly destructive to its interests. But the ministers are working earnestly and hopefully in rebuilding their Zion, and it may be hoped that the future holds for them a new era of prosperity. Among their present leaders in the work are F. M. McClintic, H. McNish, M. S. Bovey, and M. Markham. A number of young men of good promise are enlisted among their working forces. The present membership of the conference is, ministers, twenty-seven, of whom twenty-three are itinerant, and laity, 967. Its Sunday-school enrollment is 1,394, and that of its young people 361.

#### XXII. THE CENTRAL OHIO CONFERENCE.

The Central Ohio Conference, as suggested by the name, is situated in the central part of Ohio, with Columbus, the State capital, nearly at its geographical center. This conference was organized on September 4, 1878. It was not, like nearly all other conferences west of the Alleghanies, originally a mission field, but was formed by the union of portions of two old and established confer-



ences, the Sandusky and the Scioto, the object being to secure greater convenience of pastoral service.

The enabling act of the General Conference of 1877 having been complied with by the Sandusky and Scioto conferences, the ministers of the sections which were to be combined assembled in the college chapel at Westerville, and were formally organized under the name of the Central Ohio Conference. Bishop Dickson presided, and the names of fifty-six ministers were enrolled on the conference record. Some of the more prominent among these were Ex-Bishop Hanby, E. Vandemark, J. B. Resler, H. A. Thompson, J. S. Mills, B. M. Long, J. W. Sleeper, J. A. Crayton, D. Bonebrake, W. Brown, W. G. Mauk, W. J. Davis, and A. Snider. Of the original members several have died, others have removed elsewhere, and some went with the seceders, so that of the fifty-six only eighteen now remain in the conference. The lay membership included in the districts as united was 3,598. This number has advanced to 4,974, and the present ministerial force is forty-nine, thirty-three of these being in the itinerancy. Among the later accessions to this conference is Dr. T. J. Sanders, president of Otterbein University. A. E. Davis, W. O. Fries, I. L. Oakes, J. P. Stewart, A. E. Wright, and A. J. Wagner are some of the leading pastors among the younger men of the conference.

This conference is peculiarly honored in having located within its bounds Otterbein University, the oldest of the educational institutions of the Church. The influence of the college upon the conference as a formative force has been very marked. The conference has several flourishing churches, as at Westerville, Columbus, Galion, and other places. In its work among the young people it enrolls 1,131 members, and in the Sunday schools 5,721.

## XXIII. THE NORTHWEST KANSAS CONFERENCE.

This vigorous body, occupying the northwestern part of Kansas, is a natural outgrowth of the Kansas Conference. The conference was organized on August 6, 1879, at Clifton, in Washington County, holding its first session jointly with the parent conference. The name at the first was West Kansas Conference, which was retained until 1893, when it became Northwest Kansas, the southwestern part of the State being occupied by the newly organized Southwest Kansas Conference. Twenty-three names were enrolled at the organization in 1879, as follows: E. Shepherd, F. R. S. Byrd, J. Knight, J. McKee, C. U. McKee, J. W. Bean, J. H. Bloyd, J. J. Burch, W. G. Lewis, M. Jennings, L. D. Wimmer, D. Brookhart, William Horton, J. L. Lee, D. Boone, Robert Wilson, W. H. Willoughby, J. Mason, G. W. Miller, D. Waltmer, H. W. Goss, J. E. French, J. M. Putney.

The conference early felt the need of providing educational advantages within the Church for its young people, and in 1880 organized Gould College. For six years the institution was maintained with fair success, but the resources being insufficient to warrant continuance it was suspended, the conference subsequently coöperating with a college founded at Enterprise, Kansas, which has also since been discontinued. The long-prevailing financial stress of the country, and the numerical insufficiency of the membership to support enterprises necessarily expensive, and not any lack of interest or zeal on the part of those undertaking them, led inevitably to these results.

The conference has toiled successfully in the field of soul-saving, its present membership being 3,824, with thirty-six ministers, of whom thirty-three are in the itinerant ranks. Its Sunday-school membership is 6,018, and that of its young people's societies forty-five, with a

membership of 1,567. The activity of the Sunday schools and young people's organizations gives large promise for the future.

#### XXIV. THE ARKANSAS VALLEY CONFERENCE.

The Arkansas Valley Conference is located partly in southern Kansas and partly in Oklahoma Territory. It was organized in October, 1881, by Bishop Kephart, at Otterbein Chapel, near Sedgwick City, in Sedgwick County, Kansas. Its territory is in part that of the former Osage Conference. In 1893 it parted with a portion of its field and people to form the Southwest Kansas Conference.

Twenty-six names of ministers were enrolled at the time of organization. Some of the original members were J. H. Snyder, P. B. Lee, T. H. Watts, R. W. Parks, George Gay, H. S. Riegel, and D. S. Henninger. Among other well-known names that have been added since are George Kettering, S. Garrigus, W. L. Hinshaw, J. A. Beltz, and F. P. Smith.

This conference has attained a most encouraging prosperity. Its territory is among the newer districts occupied by the Church, where population changes rapidly, and yet it has gathered a membership of 3,397, with fifty-three ministers, of whom thirty-nine are in the itinerancy. The Sunday-school enrollment is 4,393. There are forty young people's societies, with a membership of 1,170. With the early occupancy of a country which is destined to have a large population, this conference possesses a great opportunity, of which it will doubtless fully avail itself. The growth to which it has already attained within the short period since its organization is a prophecy as to its future.

#### XXV. THE SOUTHERN MISSOURI CONFERENCE.

The Southern Missouri is one of the more recently formed conferences, having been organized on November

10, 1881. Its first session was held at Deer Creek Chapel, in Bates County, Bishop Kephart presiding. The territory of this conference, separated from the Neosho, embraces all the country south of the Missouri River, within the State of Missouri. The names of sixteen ministers were enrolled at the organization: S. Brown, G. Crouse, Benjamin Duck, J. R. Evans, J. S. Gingerich, J. K. Glassford, E. L. Joslin, W. F. Miller, J. R. Reed, J. Riley, R. G. Rankin, J. F. Stephens, A. Spence, O. F. Snow, J. T. Timmons, and R. C. Thomas. The lay membership comprised five hundred and nineteen names. From this it is apparent that there were no strong congregations, and the ministers entered upon their work as missionaries in the strictest sense. But the conference has prospered, and in the sixteen years of its existence has nearly trebled its membership, the present number of communicants being about 1,450, with twenty-five ministers, of whom thirteen are itinerants. The Sunday-school enrollment is 1,263.

Mr. Joslin and Mr. Thomas represented this conference in the General Conference in the noted sessions of 1885 and 1889, and A. L. Best, S. R. Thom, and Mr. A. L. Bosley in that of 1893. R. C. Thomas has proved himself a faithful servant of the conference, having been its secretary since its organization. The encouraging growth in the general membership of this conference is an indication of the fidelity of its ministers and a proof that the divine blessing has rested upon their work.

#### XXVI. THE EAST OHIO CONFERENCE.

The conference now bearing the name of East Ohio occupies the territory of the historical Muskingum Conference, one of the noblest of the early conferences west of the Alleghany Mountains. The Muskingum may be



spoken of as a strictly original conference, not having been formed by separation from any other. It consisted, in its beginnings, of the hardy pioneer ministers who crossed the mountains, settled in that section of Ohio which is watered by the Muskingum River, and began preaching the gospel to their fellow-settlers. The conference was organized as early as 1818, by Bishop Newcomer, at the house of Joseph Naftzgar, in Harrison County, Ohio, its territory extending across into western Pennsylvania, embracing that now occupied by the Allegheny Conference until 1833, when the portion of the conference lying in Pennsylvania was transferred to the Pennsylvania Conference.

Among the early members in the history of this conference are Matthias Bortsfeld, Abraham Forney, Joseph Naftzgar, Henry G. Spayth, Henry Errett, James Johnston, J. Crum, Christian Berger, and John Bash.

The Muskingum Conference grew in strength, and in 1853 it was divided, the Western Reserve Conference being formed. The latter conference had an honorable history until the year 1886, when the two bodies were again united under the name of the East Ohio Conference. As such it has advanced to the position of one of the larger conferences of the Church, its present general membership being 9,262. It has 132 organized churches, with ninety-four ministers, of whom sixty-eight are in the itinerant ranks. It has seventy-two young people's societies, with a membership of 2,891, and its Sunday-school enrollment is 11,376.

Among the members of the old Muskingum Conference were Bishop J. Weaver and Dr. B. F. Booth, one still with us, the other with the Master. Among those in later years representing the Muskingum and Western Reserve in the General Conference, and afterward the

East Ohio, were Dr. Booth, S. W. Koontz, J. M. Poulton, J. N. Lemasters, A. Brazee, J. G. Baldwin, John Noel, D. W. Sprinkle, W. B. Leggett, J. Cecil, W. A. Airhart, R. Watson, and W. O. Siffert. The conference is full of vigor and life, is occupying the cities and larger towns, some of them with very handsome churches, and will hold its place in line with the most aggressive conferences of the Church.

#### XXVII. THE MARYLAND CONFERENCE.

The Maryland Conference, while occupying largely the territory in which some of the early fathers of the Church spent most of their labors, takes its place among the newer of the conferences. Territorially it embraces the District of Columbia and nearly all of the State of Maryland, except the city of Baltimore, which is divided between the Pennsylvania and East German conferences. Under the enabling act of the General Conference of 1885, the Maryland Conference was organized at Keedysville, Maryland, on March 4, 1887, Bishop Weaver presiding. Until that time its territory had formed a part of the Virginia Conference since the separate existence of that body, from 1830. Its earlier history, therefore, is part of the history of that venerable conference, and, beyond that, of the original or Hagerstown Conference.

The new conference as organized placed upon its roll of ministers twenty-one names. Among them were A. M. Evers, J. W. Hicks, J. W. Kiracofe, J. K. Nelson, C. M. Hott, C. I. B. Brane, S. K. Wine, S. H. Snell, W. L. Martin, W. O. Fries, H. H. Fout, G. J. Roudabush. A number of these names are now found on the rolls of other conferences, and some are recorded on high. Mr. Brane, now of the East Pennsylvania, elected by the General Conference of 1893 as general secretary of the Church-Erection Society,

C. M. Hott, deceased, and L. O. Burtner, a later accession, missionary in Africa, have been elsewhere spoken of.

The conference lost a considerable number of its members who went out with the secession of 1889, but is in excellent working condition. It has twelve ministerial charges, with thirty-five organized churches and over three thousand members, and a Sunday-school enrollment of nearly thirty-six hundred. Among its churches is the recently organized mission church in Washington City, the noble fruit of Mr. Brane's zeal and industry, and of which J. E. Fout is the present successful pastor. Many of the churches are located in those fine old counties of Washington and Frederick, strictly classic ground. Here the voices of Otterbein, Boehm, Guething, and Newcomer were familiarly heard. The city of Baltimore would seem to belong naturally to this conference, but the old Otterbein Church, of which Otterbein was for nearly forty years pastor, began to receive its pastors at an early date from the Pennsylvania Conference, and continued to do so until the organization of the East German Conference, since which time that conference has supplied its pulpit. The other churches in the city, as before stated, belong to the Pennsylvania and East German conferences.

#### XXVIII. THE SOUTHWEST KANSAS CONFERENCE.

Among the latest of all the annual conferences organized at this writing is the Southwest Kansas. Its territory lies in the southwestern part of Kansas, and that portion of Oklahoma immediately south. It was organized on July 10, 1893. Bishop Mills presided at this opening session, and the following names were enrolled: H. S. Riegel, E. R. Myers, C. C. Braden, Joel Corley, G. M. Beltz, M. M. Thomas, Ira Trimble, G. W. Leitner, J. Mor-

risson, S. W. Foulk, J. Burgoine, C. H. McGrath, A. Burrill, R. J. Eubank, W. H. Sapp, O. P. Myers, E. England—seventeen names in all. The lay membership of the conference embraced about nine hundred, which has since considerably advanced. A portion of the country, that in Oklahoma, being but very recently opened up for settlement, is largely occupied by a transient population, but few having yet settled down to permanent residence. With constantly changing congregations the work of solid church building is necessarily much interrupted. Yet a number of very substantial societies attest the industry and faithfulness of these missionary pastors. With such men as Riegel, Foulk, Thomas, Morrison, and others pressing forward the work, we may hope for large prosperity for this conference. In Oklahoma especially the workers of this conference have the advantage of being early on the ground, and fidelity to the service of the Church and the great Master will lead to excellent results.

#### XXIX. THE CHICKAMAUGA CONFERENCE.

The latest conferences organized, both under the auspices of the Board of Missions, are in Tennessee. In March, 1896, Bishop Castle organized, at Chattanooga, the Chickamauga Conference. Seven preachers were present. In the assignment of work B. B. Bryant was elected presiding elder, and H. Huston superintendent. The conference is colored, and its mission will be to the colored people of that portion of Tennessee. The work is wholly missionary, and it is hoped that with the blessing of God resting upon it precious results may be attained.

#### XXX. THE TENNESSEE RIVER CONFERENCE.

The very latest of all the conferences formed at this writing is the Tennessee River Conference. The region it



occupies is chiefly western Tennessee. The conference was organized in the Methodist Episcopal church at Parsons, Tennessee, on November 26, 1896, Dr. W. M. Bell, missionary secretary, presiding. Seven preachers were present and enrolled in the organization. Two presiding-elder's districts—mission districts—were formed, and F. M. Morgan and U. B. Crowell were chosen presiding elders. Dr. T. C. Carter, superintendent of the work in Tennessee, was present and assisted in the organization. A membership of about one hundred and fifty is represented by this conference. The outlook for this new conference is regarded as altogether hopeful.

#### XXXI. THE FOREIGN CONFERENCES.

The work in Germany, Africa, China, and Japan has been referred to at length in the pages relating to the Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society and the Woman's Missionary Association, to which account the reader is referred. It will be in place here, nevertheless, to add something regarding the statistics of the work in Germany and Africa.

##### *1. The Germany Conference.*

The work in Germany, commenced in 1869, has now a membership of 991, with ten ministers, all in active service. There are twenty-three organized societies, and a Sunday-school enrollment of 655. There are ten young people's societies, with a membership of 160. Some of the ministers are Heinrich Barkemeyer, presiding elder, Bernhard Barkemeyer, Matthias Eichmiller, Friedrich Spiegel, Friedrich Holzschuher, August Hanke, and Karl Kuhn. The work proceeds under great difficulties, being constantly embarrassed by the limitations put upon it by some of the local governments, the state church having

almost absolute control. Nevertheless, the ministers toil in hope, and the people whom they gather into the Church are earnest and spiritual. The conference was organized on December 10, 1879, in Lobenstein Reuss, by Missionary Secretary Flickinger, bishop *pro tem*.

### 2. *The Sherbro Conference.*

The Sherbro Conference, representing the united work of the two missionary societies, reports in the last annual statement sixteen ministers and a general membership of 5,662. The conference was organized in 1884 by Dr. Flickinger. This field has been so fully treated in its appropriate place that nothing further needs to be added here.

### 3. *The Work in Japan and China.*

No formal organization under the name of a conference has yet been effected in the mission in Japan. And yet the work, under the careful supervision of Dr. Irie, has been very effectively organized, and is being pressed forward with most gratifying results. The reports at this writing show that about one hundred members have been gathered in due form into the Church, and the number is constantly increasing. Seven ministers, all native Japanese, are engaged in the work. They labor in a spirit of deep consecration and with great faith and spiritual enthusiasm.

In the work in China, so recently begun, twelve converts were reported in the latest statistics.

## CONCLUSION

THIS volume cannot be closed without recording once more a sincere regret that some of the ministers and people of the Church saw fit, several years ago, to sever their connection with it, and to form an independent denomination. It is believed that the reasons for taking this step will not bear the test of time, and that many of those who have gone out will by and by come to hold the same position to which thousands in the Church had earlier come,—the position which the Church holds now,—and the hope is therefore entertained that they will find their way back again into the old fold. Possibly it may not be quite soon, perhaps not while the leaders who broke lances with each other in the controversy remain. But with the culture of kindly feeling, and a generous forbearance born of the true spirit of our Lord, who prayed that his disciples might all be one, it may be hoped that so desirable an end may in time be attained.

The reader who has followed this history from its beginning will perhaps pause here a moment for a brief survey of the present and a glance toward the future. He has seen the Church, modest and yet aggressive in its origin and earlier years, rising gradually to its present position of activity and strength. The fathers builded with the courage born of true faith. Many of them were missionaries, possessing the truest pioneer instincts. Step by step, with the early westward emigration, they carried the gospel to the scattered homes of the settlers, avoiding, however, the cities, in accordance with the instincts of their birth and training,

and thus failing to seize the best opportunities for enlargement. But from their toils and prayers and faith has come the goodly heritage which has fallen to us of the present.

The latter half of the present century has been chiefly the period of development. Within this time the various organized agencies of the Church have had their origin and growth. The Publishing House extends its history farther into the past, but at the middle of the century it had not yet passed beyond a stage of infancy. Just a half century ago the first college of the Church was founded. The closing years of the century mark great advances. The church membership in 1850 was scarcely forty thousand. It has now reached two hundred and forty thousand, with over two thousand ministers. The missionary work, then not yet in organized form, is now conducted by two organizations wielding great power. The Sunday-school work, having then but feeble recognition, now presents an army of over two hundred and fifty-five thousand pupils, cared for by another army of over thirty-five thousand teachers. The Publishing House has grown into large proportions. The young people's organization enrolls seventy-three thousand members, nearly one-third of the entire membership of the Church. Education, general and theological, is widely provided for. The ministry and people are advancing to a higher apprehension of Christian life and activity. Church legislation has broadened into a larger freedom. Everywhere are seen the tokens of advancing life and the promise of greater enlargement. It will only be necessary, with these changed and improved conditions, that the Church maintain earnestly the spirit of devout piety and the deep religious earnestness and consecration on which the fathers so strongly insisted. If the Church shall thus abide in the strength which comes from close relationship with the Master, the gracious things of the present will be a prophecy of far greater things to come.



PART IV  
HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL TABLES



# PART IV

## HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL TABLES<sup>1</sup>

### I. GENERAL OFFICERS.

#### BISHOPS.

- 1800-1813, William Otterbein (died, 1813) and Martin Boehm (died, 1812).  
 1813-1814, Christian Newcomer.  
 1814-1815, Christian Newcomer.  
 1815-1817, Christian Newcomer and Andrew Zeller.  
 1817-1821, Christian Newcomer and Andrew Zeller.  
 1821-1825, Christian Newcomer and Joseph Hoffman.  
 1825-1829, Christian Newcomer and Henry Kumler, Sen.  
 1829-1833, Christian Newcomer (died, 1830) and Henry Kumler, Sen.  
 1833-1837, Henry Kumler, Sen., Samuel Hiestand, and William Brown.  
 1837-1841, Henry Kumler, Sen., Samuel Hiestand (died, 1838), and Jacob Erb.  
 1841-1845, Henry Kumler, Sen., Jacob Erb, Henry Kumler, Jun., and John Coons.  
 1845-1849, John Russel, J. J. Glossbrenner, and William Hanby.  
 1849-1853, J. J. Glossbrenner, Jacob Erb, and David Edwards.  
 1853-1857, J. J. Glossbrenner, David Edwards, and Lewis Davis.  
 1857-1861, J. J. Glossbrenner, David Edwards, Lewis Davis, D.D., and John Russel.  
 1861-1865, J. J. Glossbrenner, David Edwards, Jacob Markwood, Daniel Shuck, and Henry Kumler, Jun.  
 1865-1869, J. J. Glossbrenner, David Edwards, Jacob Markwood, Jonathan Weaver, and Daniel Shuck.  
 1869-1873, J. J. Glossbrenner, David Edwards, D.D., Jonathan Weaver, and John Dickson.  
 1873-1877, J. J. Glossbrenner, David Edwards, D.D. (died, 1876), Jonathan Weaver, D.D., and John Dickson.  
 1877-1881, J. J. Glossbrenner, Jonathan Weaver, D.D., John Dickson, D.D., Milton Wright, D.D., and Nicholas Castle.  
 1881-1885, J. J. Glossbrenner, D.D., Jonathan Weaver, D.D., John Dickson, D.D., E. B. Kephart, D.D., and Nicholas Castle.  
 1885-1889, J. J. Glossbrenner, D.D., *Emeritus* (died, 1887), Jonathan Weaver, D.D., E. B. Kephart, D.D., N. Castle, J. Dickson, D.D., M. Wright, D.D., D. K. Flickinger, D.D.  
 1889-1893, Jonathan Weaver, D.D., E. B. Kephart, D.D., LL.D., N. Castle, D.D., J. Dickson, D.D., J. W. Hott, D.D.  
 1893-1897, Jonathan Weaver, D.D., *Emeritus*, E. B. Kephart, D.D., LL.D., N. Castle, D.D., J. W. Hott, D.D., LL.D., J. S. Mills, D.D., Ph.D.

<sup>1</sup>The following tables are compiled chiefly from the "Handbook of the United Brethren in Christ," by E. L. Shuey, A.M., and from the United Brethren Year-Books.

## AGENTS OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE.

Three Trustees—John Russel, Jonathan Dresbach, George Dresbach— and Editor W. R. Rhinehart.....	1834-1837
Rev. Wm. Hanby, Treasurer and Agent.....	1837-1839
Rev. Wm. Hanby, Agent and Editor.....	1839-1845
Rev. J. Markwood (elected, but did not serve).....	1845
Rev. N. Altman.....	1845-1852
Rev. Wm. Hanby.....	1852-1853
Rev. S. Vonnieda.....	1853-1854
Rev. S. Vonnieda and Rev. H. Kumler, Jun.....	1854
Rev. S. Vonnieda and T. N. Sowers.....	1855-1861
T. N. Sowers and J. B. King.....	1861-1864
T. N. Sowers and Rev. W. J. Shuey.....	1864-1865
Rev. W. J. Shuey and T. N. Sowers.....	1865
Rev. W. J. Shuey and Rev. Wm. McKee.....	1865-1866
Rev. W. J. Shuey.....	1866

## EDITORS OF THE "RELIGIOUS TELESCOPE."

Rev. Wm. Rhinehart.....	1834-1839
Rev. Wm. Hanby.....	1839-1845
Rev. D. Edwards.....	1845-1849
Rev. Wm. Hanby.....	1849-1852
Assistant: Rev. John Lawrence.....	1850-1852
Rev. John Lawrence.....	1852-1864
Rev. D. Berger.....	1864-1869
Rev. M. Wright.....	1869-1873
Assistant: Rev. D. Berger.....	1869-1873
Rev. M. Wright and Rev. W. O. Tobey, A.M.....	1873-1877
Rev. J. W. Hott, D.D.....	1877-1889
Assistant: Rev. W. O. Tobey, A.M.....	1877-1881
Rev. M. R. Drury, A.M.....	1881-1889
Rev. I. L. Kephart, D.D.....	1889
Associate: Rev. M. R. Drury, D.D.....	1889

## EDITORS OF SABBATH-SCHOOL PERIODICALS.

Bishop D. Edwards.....	1854-1857
Rev. Alex. Owen.....	1857-1859
Rev. S. Vonnieda.....	1859-1869
Rev. D. Berger, D.D.....	1869-1893
Associate: Rev. J. W. Etter, D.D.....	1889-1893
Rev. J. W. Etter, D.D.....	1893-1895
Rev. D. Berger, D.D.....	1895
Associate: Rev. H. A. Thompson, D.D., LL.D.....	1893

## EDITORS OF "UNITY MAGAZINE."

Bishop D. Edwards.....	1853-1857
Rev. Alex. Owen.....	1857-1859

## EDITORS OF "QUARTERLY REVIEW."

Rev. J. W. Etter, D.D.....	1889-1893
Associates: Rev. G. A. Funkhouser, D.D.....	1891-1892
Rev. J. P. Landis, D.D., Ph.D.....	1891-1892
Rev. A. W. Drury, D.D.....	1891-1892
Professors of Union Biblical Seminary.....	1893
Rev. G. M. Mathews, D.D.....	1894



## EDITOR OF "WATCHWORD."

Rev. H. F. Shupe.....	1893.....
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## EDITORS OF GERMAN PAPERS.

Rev. John Russel (unofficial).....	1840-1841
Rev. Jacob Erb.....	1841-1842
Rev. N. Altman.....	1846-1847
Rev. D. Strickler.....	1847-1851
Rev. Henry Staub.....	1851-1855
Rev. Julius Degmeier.....	1855-1858
Rev. S. Vonnieda.....	1858-1866
Rev. Ezekiel Light.....	1866-1869
Rev. William Mittendorf.....	1869-1885
Rev. Ezekiel Light.....	1885-1889
Rev. William Mittendorf.....	1889-1893
Rev. Ezekiel Light, D.D. <sup>1</sup> .....	1893
Rev. William Mittendorf <sup>2</sup> .....	1893-1895
Rev. Edward Lorenz.....	1895.....

## EDITORS OF "WOMAN'S EVANGEL."

Mrs. L. R. Keister, M.A.....	1882-1893
Associate: Mrs. L. K. Miller, M.A.....	1888-1893
Mrs. L. K. Miller, M.A.....	1893.....

## EDITORS OF "SEARCH LIGHT."

Rev. W. M. Bell, D.D.....	1895.....
Associate: Rev. Wm. McKee, D.D.....	1895.....

## SECRETARIES OF THE BOARD OF MISSIONS.

Rev. J. C. Bright.....	1853-1857
Rev. D. K. Flickinger, D.D.....	1857-1885
(Rev. J. C. Bright acted as secretary for a number of months during 1857 and 1858, but was compelled by declining health to leave the work.)	
Rev. Z. Warner, D.D.....	1885-1887
Rev. Wm. McKee, Acting Secretary.....	1887-1888
Rev. B. F. Booth, D.D. <sup>2</sup> .....	1888-1893
Rev. W. M. Bell, D.D.....	1893.....

## TREASURERS OF THE BOARD OF MISSIONS.

Rev. John Kemp.....	1853-1869
Rev. Wm. McKee.....	1869-1873
Rev. J. W. Hott.....	1873-1877
Rev. J. K. Billheimer.....	1877-1885
Rev. Wm. McKee, D.D.....	1885.....

## SECRETARIES OF CHURCH-ERECTION SOCIETY.

Secretaries of Board of Missions.....	1872-1889
Rev. John Hill <sup>1</sup> .....	1889-1890
Rev. Wm. McKee, Acting Secretary.....	1890-1893
Rev. C. I. B. Brane, A.M. <sup>1</sup> .....	1893-1894
Rev. W. M. Weekley.....	1895.....

## TREASURERS OF CHURCH-ERECTION SOCIETY.

Treasurers of Board of Missions.....	1872.....
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<sup>1</sup> Resigned.      <sup>2</sup> Died.

## SECRETARIES OF WOMAN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

Mrs. L. R. Keister, M.A.....	1881-1893
Mrs. B. F. Witt.....	1893.....

## TREASURERS OF WOMAN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.

Mrs. W. J. Shuey.....	1875-1881
Mrs. D. L. Rike.....	1881.....

## SECRETARIES OF THE SABBATH-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

Rev. I. Crouse.....	1865-1877
Col. Robert Cowden, Lit.D.....	1877.....

## TREASURERS OF THE SABBATH-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

J. B. King.....	1865-1866
Rev. S. Vonnieda.....	1866-1880
Rev. W. J. Shuey.....	1880.....

## GENERAL MANAGER OF UNION BIBLICAL SEMINARY.

Rev. D. R. Miller, D.D.....	1885.....
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## SECRETARIES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Rev. H. A. Thompson, D.D.....	1873-1881
Prof. J. P. Landis, D.D.....	1882-1885
Rev. L. Bookwalter, D.D.....	1886-1894
Prof. S. D. Faust, D.D.....	1894.....

## TREASURERS OF BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Rev. L. Davis, D.D.....	1873-1877
Prof. G. A. Funkhouser, D.D.....	1877.....

## SECRETARIES OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN UNION.

Rev. W. A. Dickson.....	1890-1893
Rev. H. F. Shupe.....	1893.....

## TREASURERS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN UNION.

Chester B. Boda.....	1890-1892
Z. W. Barnard.....	1892.....

## SECRETARY OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D.....	1885.....
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## LIBRARIANS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

W. A. Shuey, A.M.....	1885-1886
E. L. Shuey, A.M.....	1886-1895
W. A. Shuey, A.M.....	1895.....

## II. GENERAL CHURCH BOARDS.

Board of Trustees of the Church.

Board of Missions.

Church-Erection Board.

Woman's Missionary Board.

Sunday-School Board.

Trustees of the Publishing House.

Directors of Union Biblical Seminary.

Board of Education.

Executive Council of Young People's Christian Union.

Board of Managers of Historical Society.

The headquarters of all the general societies of the Church are at Dayton, Ohio.

### III. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

*Otterbein University*—Westerville, Ohio. Founded, 1847.

*Western College*—Toledo, Iowa. Founded, 1856.

*Westfield College*—Westfield, Illinois. Founded, 1865.

*Lane University*—Lecompton, Kansas. Founded, 1865.

*Philomath College*—Philomath, Oregon. Founded, 1865.

*Lebanon Valley College*—Annville, Pennsylvania. Founded, 1866.

*Avalon College*—Avalon, Missouri. Founded as *Academy*, 1869; as *College*, 1881.

*San Joaquin Valley College*—Woodbridge, California. Founded, 1878.

*Union College*—Buckhannon, W. Va. Founded as *Academy*, 1883; as *College*, 1896.

*York College*—York, Nebraska. Founded, 1890.

*Union Biblical Seminary*—Theological—Dayton, Ohio. Founded, 1871.

*Shenandoah Institute*—Dayton, Virginia. Founded, 1876.

*Edwards Academy*—White Pine, Tennessee. Founded, 1877.

*Erie Conference Seminary*—Sugar Grove, Warren County, Pa. Founded, 1884.

*Rufus Clark and Wife Training School*—Shaingay, West Africa. Founded, 1887.

Number of students in the above institutions, 1896, 2,000.

Number of graduates, including 1896, 1,611.

### IV. THE CHURCH.

#### HISTORICAL OUTLINE.

PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN was born in Germany, 1726; came to America as a Missionary, 1752; Pastor in Baltimore, 1774 until his death, 1813; Bishop in the United Brethren Church, 1800-1813.

Religious Movement under Otterbein and Boehm, 1766-1800.

First Conference, Baltimore, Maryland, 1789.

Church Formally Organized in Frederick County, Maryland, 1800.

First General Conference, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania, 1815.

Confession of Faith, Revised and Formally Adopted, 1815.

First Sunday School Organized, in Corydon, Indiana, 1820.

Publishing House Established, at Circleville, Ohio, 1834.

Constitution Adopted, First, 1837; Second, 1841.

First College Founded, Otterbein University, 1847.

Home, Frontier, and Foreign Missionary Society Organized, 1853.

Missionary Work in Africa Begun, 1855.

Sunday-School Association Organized, 1865.

Board of Education Organized, 1869.

Church-Erection Society Organized, 1869.

Missionary Work in Germany Begun, 1870.

Union Biblical Seminary Founded, 1871.

Woman's Missionary Association Organized, 1875.

Missionary Work Among the Chinese on Pacific Coast Begun, 1882.

Missionary Work in China Begun, 1889.

Amended Constitution and Revised Confession of Faith Adopted, 1889.

Young People's Christian Union Organized, June 5, 1890.

Mission in Japan Opened, 1895.

Territory Occupied, United States, Canada, and Missions in Germany, Africa, China, and Japan.

## GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP.

1813 <sup>1</sup> .....	10,000	1850 <sup>1</sup> .....	40,000	1880.....	157,835
1820 <sup>1</sup> .....	9,000	1853 <sup>1</sup> .....	47,000	1890.....	197,123
1835 <sup>1</sup> .....	20,000	1861.....	94,453	1895.....	233,204
1845 <sup>1</sup> .....	30,000	1870.....	118,055	1896.....	238,782

## GENERAL CONFERENCES.

- 1815—Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania.
- 1817—Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania.
- 1821—Mr. Dewalt Mechlin's, Fairfield County, Ohio.
- 1825—Jacob Shaup's, Tuscarawas County, Ohio.
- 1829—Mr. Dewalt Mechlin's, Fairfield County, Ohio.
- 1833—George Dresbach's, Pickaway County, Ohio.
- 1837—Germantown, Ohio.
- 1841—Dresbach's Church, Pickaway County, Ohio.
- 1845—Circleville, Pickaway County, Ohio.
- 1849—Germantown, Ohio.
- 1853—Miltonville, Ohio.
- 1857—Cincinnati, Ohio.
- 1861—Westerville, Ohio.
- 1865—Western, Iowa.
- 1869—Lebanon, Pennsylvania.
- 1873—Dayton, Ohio.
- 1877—Westfield, Illinois.
- 1881—Lisbon, Iowa.
- 1885—Fostoria, Ohio.
- 1889—York, Pennsylvania.
- 1893—Dayton, Ohio.
- 1897—Toledo, Iowa.

## ORGANIZATION OF ANNUAL CONFERENCES.

First conference of ministers of the East was held in 1789.

A second conference of ministers was held in 1791.

Following these, necessary business was transacted at "big meetings," or on the authority of two or more preachers,—1792-1799.

The original conference in the East was constituted in 1800.

## TIME OF ORGANIZATION.

*The First Six Conferences were:*

Original Conference.....	1800
Miami.....	1810
Muskingum.....	1818
Scioto.....	1825
Indiana.....	1830
Pennsylvania and Virginia conferences made separate.....	1831
Allegheny.....	1839
Arkansas Valley.....	1881
Auglaize (first called Maumee).....	1853
California.....	1864
Central Illinois.....	1865
Central Ohio.....	1878

<sup>1</sup> Estimated.



Chickamauga .....	1896
Colorado .....	1872
Columbia River (first called Cascade, then Walla Walla) .....	1865
Dakota (now not a separate conference) .....	1871
Des Moines .....	1861
East German .....	1870
East Nebraska .....	1873
East Ohio (by union of Muskingum and Western Reserve) .....	1886
East Pennsylvania .....	1847
Elkhorn (now not a separate conference) .....	1882
Elkhorn and Dakota united .....	1885
Erie .....	1853
Fox River (now not a separate conference) .....	1861
Germany .....	1879
Hagerstown (the original conference, no longer distinctly preserved) .....	1800
Illinois .....	1845
Indiana .....	1830
Iowa .....	1845
Kansas .....	1857
Kentucky .....	1850
Lower Wabash (by division of Wabash) .....	1858
Maryland .....	1887
Miami .....	1810
Michigan (first called North Michigan) .....	1862
Minnesota .....	1857
Missouri .....	1858
Muskingum (part of East Ohio) .....	1818
Neosho .....	1870
North Michigan (first called Saginaw) .....	1877
North Ohio (first called Michigan) .....	1853
Northwest Kansas (first called West Kansas) .....	1879
Ohio German .....	1853
Ontario (first called Canada) .....	1856
Oregon .....	1855
Parkersburg .....	1858
Pennsylvania (by division of Hagerstown Conference) .....	1831
Rock River .....	1853
St. Joseph .....	1846
Sandusky .....	1834
Scioto .....	1825
Sherbro .....	1884
Southern Missouri (first called Southwest Missouri) .....	1881
Southwest Kansas .....	1893
Tennessee .....	1866
Tennessee River .....	1896
Upper Wabash (by division of Wabash) .....	1858
Virginia (by division of Hagerstown Conference) .....	1831
Wabash (no longer distinctly preserved) .....	1835
West Nebraska .....	1878
Western Reserve (part of East Ohio) .....	1853
White River .....	1846
Wisconsin .....	1858

## STATISTICS FOR 1896.

CONFERENCES.		Organized Churches.	Itinerants.	Local Preachers.	Members at End of Year.	Y. P. C. U. Societies.	Y. P. C. U. Membership.	No. of Sunday Schools.	Scholars Enrolled.	Teachers and Officers.	Preachers' Salaries.
1.	Allegheny.....	209	75	11	12,388	88	3,381	180	14,631	1,908	\$87,016 14
2.	Arkansas Valley.....	105	39	14	3,397	40	1,170	77	3,766	627	8,281 72
3.	Auglaize.....	124	45	13	6,531	27	1,285	106	9,176	1,158	16,778 81
4.	California.....	21	19	9	789	10	338	25	1,108	160	4,687 37
5.	Central Illinois.....	57	25	11	3,498	26	881	56	3,770	554	12,241 67
6.	Central Ohio.....	66	33	16	4,974	31	1,131	63	5,003	718	12,769 54
7.	Colorado.....	21	10	6	798	6	250	21	1,200	136	4,046 60
8.	Columbia River.....	41	17	6	1,118	7	290	18	860	91	2,865 48
9.	Des Moines.....	140	59	20	5,372	52	1,629	123	6,137	909	23,224 93
10.	East German.....	97	49	15	6,532	56	3,107	84	9,682	1,289	20,947 06
11.	East Nebraska.....	69	39	9	4,012	43	1,659	61	3,788	539	13,539 84
12.	East Ohio.....	132	68	26	9,262	72	2,891	123	10,020	1,356	24,452 93
13.	East Pennsylvania.....	79	62	3	8,513	48	2,966	77	11,188	1,527	23,694 75
14.	Elk and Dak.....	41	16	7	1,000	9	271	32	1,077	201	2,865 75
15.	Erie.....	122	63	14	3,861	40	1,481	115	5,851	851	16,813 83
16.	Illinois.....	66	33	13	3,327	33	1,360	51	2,870	473	10,968 63
17.	Indiana.....	163	44	30	10,082	48	1,444	135	7,127	1,034	11,398 99
18.	Iowa.....	133	62	21	6,800	51	2,130	104	5,999	887	6,718 93
19.	Kansas.....	94	32	18	4,151	53	1,613	86	4,601	769	11,583 51
20.	Kentucky.....	25	16	4	605	.....	.....	9	270	50	270 53
21.	Lower Wabash.....	199	66	25	11,360	43	1,835	168	10,672	1,684	14,550 98
22.	Maryland.....	34	12	10	3,022	18	810	32	3,111	510	5,584 27
23.	Miami.....	94	53	17	11,167	68	3,135	93	11,555	1,505	29,581 73
24.	Michigan.....	25	16	3	958	8	256	24	1,555	225	5,591 64
25.	Minnesota.....	36	21	.....	1,343	18	629	27	1,629	249	5,690 79
26.	Missouri.....	92	28	9	3,212	17	651	55	3,055	358	6,710 97
27.	Neosho.....	80	34	14	3,470	42	1,243	80	3,680	559	7,579 93
28.	N. W. Kansas.....	111	33	3	3,824	45	1,567	96	5,300	718	8,983 81
29.	North Michigan.....	36	23	4	967	13	361	28	1,168	226	3,108 47
30.	North Ohio.....	78	35	8	4,012	30	1,339	65	4,777	771	10,747 90
31.	Ohio German.....	43	29	.....	2,312	19	609	35	2,930	392	9,742 27
32.	Ontario.....	38	12	9	1,426	16	490	32	1,956	239	3,737 42
33.	Oregon.....	30	12	8	1,114	8	253	22	1,243	73	3,182 65
34.	Parkersburg.....	259	40	47	11,400	49	1,603	203	12,080	1,603	13,367 67
35.	Pennsylvania.....	138	66	8	11,653	68	3,622	127	15,503	2,066	31,192 15
36.	Rock River.....	37	16	4	1,471	17	590	33	2,150	344	7,748 28
37.	Sandusky.....	141	48	.....	9,966	60	2,914	134	11,854	1,789	31,667 39
38.	Scioto.....	138	38	17	8,827	40	1,788	145	8,870	1,152	12,945 79
39.	St. Joseph.....	152	78	22	10,939	83	2,780	146	11,925	1,756	29,532 00
40.	S. Missouri.....	36	13	12	1,450	5	162	17	1,132	131	3,012 20
41.	S. W. Kansas.....	27	14	.....	977	10	250	20	955	167	2,117 48
42.	Tennessee.....	50	23	23	1,857	11	358	29	1,917	188	2,327 80
43.	Upper Wabash.....	117	41	28	7,437	32	1,602	108	6,933	1,047	16,316 72
44.	Virginia.....	169	34	17	9,652	25	1,501	145	8,180	1,072	13,020 12
45.	West Nebraska.....	79	28	8	2,235	24	701	63	2,920	480	4,670 29
46.	White River.....	111	33	21	7,183	31	1,708	91	6,572	966	13,683 55
47.	Wisconsin.....	53	31	4	2,070	19	776	55	2,477	362	7,830 10
48.	Germany.....	23	10	.....	879	10	100	16	655	52	392 11
49.	Africa.....	12	16	.....	5,062	2	79	11	626	50	133 28
50.	Japan.....	3	7	.....	100	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
51.	China.....	1	2	.....	12	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Totals, 1896.....		4,250	1,718	474	238,782	1,571	62,639	3,646	255,498	35,363	\$567,886 77
Totals, 1895.....		4,242	1,669	435	235,204	1,419	56,405	3,573	246,268	35,160	569,514 29
Increase.....		8	49	39	5,578	152	6,234	73	9,230	203	.....
Decrease.....		.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	\$1,627 52

## UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST.

	Church Expenses.	Total for Missions.	Church Erection.	Colleges, Academies, and U. B. Seminary.	Total for All Purposes.	No. of Church-Houses.	Valuation of Church-Houses.	No. Parsonages.	Valuation of Parsonages.
1	\$38,269 18	\$4,322 30	\$194 27	\$2,064 55	\$88,051 22	180	\$407,452	32	\$50,730
2	4,011 84	300 16	21 63	48 12	13,362 68	32	41,400	10	5,000
3	12,340 75	1,677 29	110 65	155 63	33,631 04	115	143,900	12	8,325
4	2,312 48	327 50	19 00	317 75	8,266 26	13	25,450	11	9,550
5	5,606 80	1,126 41	74 22	651 46	21,306 82	54	76,720	19	13,590
6	9,325 25	2,092 32	217 20	1,167 27	27,611 68	64	104,985	6	11,000
7	1,950 54	266 54	7 25	16 40	6,936 21	9	30,650	7	5,600
8	919 27	100 95	21 85	3 50	4,163 62	10	15,700	6	3,425
9	14,697 67	1,237 07	114 36	2,098 21	43,466 28	87	122,520	28	18,000
10	20,636 59	2,865 42	198 50	623 88	51,100 12	85	258,275	15	32,100
11	3,766 21	670 18	40 23	1,933 60	21,259 96	52	65,240	16	8,150
12	21,508 48	2,446 02	181 90	545 50	53,373 62	126	303,225	11	9,600
13	16,974 48	3,956 40	409 40	1,124 32	52,101 71	74	167,766	20	37,725
14	544 89	134 50	5 00	562 41	4,362 88	16	12,270	4	1,500
15	905 72	1,210 20	104 03	927 29	22,175 61	83	123,816	29	20,275
16	2,817 40	769 17	82 91	658 25	16,600 87	59	80,650	18	11,825
17	7,601 85	1,151 86	47 85	173 75	21,757 43	125	98,692	15	6,755
18	15,191 61	1,765 68	89 75	2,494 99	28,747 28	100	185,625	33	29,000
19	7,324 67	613 27	50 77	327 13	21,353 15	52	66,940	19	12,670
20	73 39	6 20	.....	.....	358 42	11	3,000	.....	.....
21	11,731 41	1,736 34	78 21	2,508 40	33,214 96	150	141,419	15	10,450
22	2,934 96	1,101 78	159 50	284 88	11,346 00	35	78,975	7	11,250
23	26,854 16	5,357 22	2,118 48	3,682 76	75,024 26	90	341,485	20	28,400
24	3,766 76	396 67	44 60	21 00	8,990 97	11	20,950	3	2,400
25	2,994 23	327 95	126 00	77 06	9,893 64	21	24,000	10	6,500
26	3,813 57	655 10	18 33	14 50	12,096 97	40	36,635	8	4,515
27	6,034 18	449 81	75 20	27 70	15,150 39	36	38,225	14	4,935
28	2,909 34	511 55	81 12	28 60	13,821 00	33	51,900	12	5,200
29	1,033 53	77 97	11 45	11 00	3,639 42	16	17,430	5	2,350
30	4,907 28	1,065 69	39 50	3,015 50	21,734 23	84	114,579	15	11,600
31	5,588 04	2,050 87	39 00	95 25	19,166 35	38	108,150	21	22,500
32	2,406 37	507 43	11 00	19 80	7,205 74	29	36,825	.....	.....
33	1,323 50	235 96	14 49	20 90	5,230 39	21	48,100	6	2,450
34	13,938 72	829 89	72 00	361 50	30,248 14	171	208,430	23	10,400
35	25,848 67	5,993 24	385 75	1,224 30	72,115 23	135	357,964	30	55,484
36	.....	1,246 79	84 90	220 16	10,203 88	32	46,950	12	8,150
37	37,851 07	3,950 02	218 22	1,420 13	82,234 58	132	301,270	26	25,965
38	11,576 37	783 54	95 96	113 34	27,301 29	139	119,275	4	3,750
39	17,108 00	3,169 00	181 00	723 00	54,504 00	138	237,785	27	27,235
40	360 80	139 79	5 46	17 25	3,791 71	15	18,120	3	1,800
41	255 43	152 60	18 00	28 41	2,912 82	9	8,800	1	500
42	112 70	181 33	9 17	31 00	3,040 65	22	19,600	1	1,200
43	9,699 22	1,323 70	229 50	624 86	30,407 53	100	131,200	17	11,266
44	9,415 27	1,266 93	164 21	132 34	25,662 62	119	111,471	14	11,706
45	1,539 80	107 28	11 50	54 15	6,882 42	19	20,500	8	2,925
46	12,991 62	1,638 54	105 50	377 10	30,661 34	107	137,860	8	4,900
47	5,170 45	373 87	70 25	131 00	14,405 03	42	43,740	8	4,900
48	1,134 49	488 98	211 45	.....	2,359 93	7	30,875	6	5,000
49	436 93	340 85	15 34	202 00	1,158 08	12	10,370	7	538
50	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
51	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	\$410,413 94	\$63,498 14	\$6,685 80	\$31,325 90	\$1,173,490 43	3,147	\$5,197,159	660	\$583,089
	384,339 02	69,915 94	6,350 67	48,490 94	1,186,922 96	3,104	5,197,420	612	512,040
	\$26,074 92	.....	\$335 13	.....	.....	43	.....	48	\$71,049
	.....	\$6,417 80	.....	\$17,165 04	\$13,432 53	.....	\$261	.....	.....

## COMPARATIVE STATISTICS OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST, 1813-1896.

Y. E. A. R.	Organized Churches.	Itinerants.	Local Preachers.	Total Ministers.	Members.	No. Sunday Schools.	Scholars in S. S.	Teachers and Officers.	Scholars, Teachers, and Officers.	Conversions in S. S.	Y. P. C. U. Societies.	Y. P. C. U. Membership.	Religious Tracts.
1813					10,000								
1820					9,000								
1825					20,000								
1830					30,000								
1835					40,000								
1840					47,000								
1845					61,389	1,009							
1850					94,453	1,513							
1855					89,811	1,906							
1860					91,370	1,775	68,171	9,928	78,069				
1865					97,983	2,042	80,556	12,556	93,513				9,209
1870					108,122	2,268	106,002	14,003	108,183				9,508
1875					108,965			16,057	122,059				8,957
1880					118,055	2,420		16,417	128,842				9,204
1885					120,445	2,519			135,954				
1890					125,464	2,610			144,870				
1895					1,822	2,739			157,197				
1873					1,886	2,644			148,694				
1874					1,967	2,718			160,931				
1875					1,952	2,854			163,439				
1876					2,059	2,897			169,530				
1877					2,152	3,000			177,312				
1878					2,217	3,208			187,203				9,674
1879					2,196	3,043			185,960				
1880					2,196	3,043			185,960				
1881					2,196	3,043			185,960				
1882					2,220	3,213			185,960				
1883					2,246	3,213			185,960				
1884					2,230	3,213			185,960				
1885					2,253	3,213			185,960				
1886					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1887					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1888					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1889					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1890					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1891					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1892					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1893					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1894					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1895					2,268	3,213			185,960				
1896					2,268	3,213			185,960				



## HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL TABLES

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YEAR.	Preachers' Salaries.*	Church Building and Expenses.	Local S. S. Collections.	Bishops' Salaries.	Preachers' Aid.	Collected for Missions—General & Special.	Woman's Missions.	Total for Missions.	S. S. for Missions.	Church Erection.
1866.....	\$197,686 06	\$72,874 51	\$19,994 98	\$3,857 81	.....	\$25,377 27	.....	.....	.....	.....
1867.....	213,369 27	130,030 26	25,054 04	3,957 57	.....	26,999 47	.....	.....	.....	.....
1868.....	262,093 04	191,284 43	27,125 36	4,383 67	.....	29,150 73	.....	.....	.....	.....
1869.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1870.....	287,565 17	210,358 40	31,676 04	4,887 97	\$2,516 90	31,738 91	.....	.....	.....	.....
1871.....	304,634 88	248,848 90	34,676 28	5,046 08	2,980 51	35,261 12	.....	.....	.....	.....
1872.....	324,255 13	262,634 82	38,299 07	5,508 44	3,425 89	39,149 23	.....	.....	.....	.....
1873.....	336,729 33	279,775 95	41,456 57	5,000 58	2,959 99	37,833 78	.....	.....	.....	.....
1874.....	332,079 78	274,061 74	40,413 87	5,896 05	3,053 29	38,528 87	.....	.....	.....	.....
1875.....	335,215 72	290,893 31	38,620 47	5,942 88	2,762 36	38,925 94	.....	.....	.....	.....
1876.....	329,296 12	234,993 46	38,647 84	5,844 99	2,608 14	35,603 01	.....	.....	.....	.....
1877.....	335,072 80	207,907 29	36,509 88	5,631 93	2,273 49	33,648 60	\$458 50	\$36,061 51	.....	.....
1878.....	346,415 51	186,983 77	39,379 36	5,677 00	2,444 93	33,886 96	825 74	33,973 34	.....	.....
1879.....	343,063 06	229,824 97	43,258 81	6,021 88	2,771 06	35,554 87	1,391 18	35,278 14	.....	.....
1880.....	343,199 57	234,117 62	45,066 39	6,225 19	2,735 49	41,562 78	1,985 68	37,550 55	.....	.....
1881.....	376,638 21	273,325 23	48,815 57	6,399 15	2,917 24	38,989 56	3,061 84	45,284 62	.....	1,851 01
1882.....	387,710 99	268,800 02	53,246 93	6,661 42	3,136 17	42,998 84	4,948 90	47,702 13	.....	2,525 50
1883.....	414,988 90	299,429 05	53,643 44	6,581 69	3,397 40	54,138 22	5,962 24	60,100 46	.....	1,742 02
1884.....	407,515 57	275,514 58	54,401 17	6,334 96	3,897 40	50,307 61	6,654 24	56,961 85	.....	3,071 93
1885.....	404,539 30	253,899 67	51,523 59	6,001 91	2,891 27	56,132 68	8,326 95	64,459 63	.....	2,294 28
1886.....	416,729 21	251,475 46	54,337 75	5,999 39	3,690 66	52,180 58	9,794 50	61,975 08	.....	2,903 45
1887.....	448,677 93	319,058 80	63,764 84	6,157 19	3,319 10	55,672 32	8,791 75	64,464 07	.....	2,934 72
1888.....	474,590 76	386,258 58	65,312 29	6,485 83	3,568 58	76,829 72	10,112 46	86,942 18	.....	2,436 44
1889.....	462,394 46	337,244 46	64,189 71	6,485 65	3,073 51	50,295 64	8,056 36	58,342 00	.....	3,457 60
1890.....	486,269 76	310,440 42	66,486 24	7,068 70	3,275 30	42,598 06	10,462 57	53,060 63	.....	1,964 17
1891.....	520,780 34	376,529 64	64,902 24	7,397 05	3,405 14	56,213 65	11,812 37	68,026 02	.....	4,025 41
1892.....	545,261 21	433,507 03	72,797 88	7,615 39	3,559 33	56,052 68	13,366 92	69,419 60	.....	5,242 64
1893.....	573,772 04	469,547 58	74,959 47	8,003 55	3,436 26	59,420 82	13,702 95	73,123 77	.....	6,098 25
1894.....	570,812 92	397,144 09	76,641 97	8,014 54	3,614 89	54,805 27	14,930 92	69,736 19	.....	8,897 29
1895.....	569,514 29	384,339 02	75,821 13	8,376 58	4,207 12	54,253 64	15,162 11	69,415 75	.....	5,972 47
1896.....	567,886 77	410,413 94	78,063 13	8,707 18	3,659 70	48,219 58	15,278 57	63,498 15	.....	5,032 61
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6,350 67
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6,685 80

\* Estimates, supplied by Prof. A. W. Drury, D.D.

\* Not published.

\* Including presiding elders' salaries and presents.

## COMPARATIVE STATISTICS, 1813-1896 — CONTINUED.

YEAR.	Fund and Children's Day Collection.	Centenary.	Bible Cause.	Publication Fund.	Union Biblical Seminary Collections.	Educational Beneficiary.	Colleges, Academies, and U. B. Seminary.	Total for All Purposes.	No. Church-Houses.	Value of Church Property.	No. Parsonages.	Value of Parsonages.
1857.									776			
1861.									1,041			
1865.									1,248			
1866.			\$2,919 62	\$11,977 35				\$341,279 00	1,173			
1867.			4,416 55	4,958 24				418,720 11	1,247		12	
1868.			3,916 42	1,344 70				525,681 99	1,334		25	
* 1869.							\$6,383 64					
1870.			2,994 22					580,288 79	1,473	\$2,506,000		
1871.	\$999 02							641,848 97	1,514			
1872.	1,956 14							681,300 93	1,681		168	
1873.	2,085 26						6,072 21	720,751 07	1,681			
1874.	1,998 44	\$30,464 42					14,925 51	745,216 17	1,780	2,054,000	221	
1875.	1,787 39	46,935 27					17,961 83	783,304 82	1,867	2,502,800	249	
1876.	1,584 38	1,733 20			\$1,797 38		19,354 54	689,799 21	1,909		263	
1877.	1,297 14				1,624 31		17,132 53	638,060 24	2,003		277	
1878.	1,325 81				1,772 36		13,713 90	618,616 21	2,093		308	
1879.	1,321 62				3,255 37		10,254 92	661,662 56	2,132		319	
1880.	1,646 86				2,231 23		11,290 85	700,637 32	2,168		318	
1881.	1,581 47					\$1,244 40	20,882 36	811,209 42	2,250	2,804,173	377	\$251,696
1882.	1,741 56					1,110 72	36,684 45	893,411 59	2,322	2,974,313	389	282,284
1883.	1,783 93					1,177 78	36,450 51	892,470 04	2,381	3,256,833	398	322,229
1884.	1,741 81					1,722 14	29,400 41	817,504 23	2,454	3,276,559	406	326,462
1885.	1,581 62					1,206 88	30,036 90	812,716 01	2,508	3,350,900	439	344,655
1886.	1,794 92				2,491 92	1,329 19	38,630 30	943,845 55	2,641	3,350,900	469	362,545
1887.	3,091 84				3,635 65	1,374 97	27,872 98	1,036,086 38	2,699	3,576,381	483	388,085
1888.	3,255 77					1,249 18	22,572 18	965,023 51	2,728	3,757,161	494	401,939
1889.	3,010 39					3,411 15	17,134 20	972,296 74	2,779	3,788,025	444	392,384
1890.	3,319 39					1,428 88	26,042 49	1,114,035 46	2,753	4,017,443	494	413,847
1891.	3,608 97					1,553 86	53,830 15	1,183,030 80	2,976	4,146,994	518	443,674
1892.	3,607 63					1,548 30	36,675 24	1,113,690 80	2,976	4,430,445	564	502,616
1893.	3,657 14					1,624 67	25,307 72	1,240,232 42	3,053	4,661,770	588	514,296
1894.	3,382 36					1,473 48	60,516 42	1,196,369 67	3,300	4,872,188	595	531,411
1895.	2,837 97					1,593 89	48,490 94	1,186,922 96	3,223	5,197,420	612	512,040
1896.	3,017 10					1,515 05	31,325 90	1,173,490 43	3,147	5,197,159	690	583,089

STATISTICS OF UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH AS GIVEN BY  
CENSUS OF 1890, BY STATES.

STATES.	Number of Organiza- tions.	Church Edifices.	Seating Capacity.	Halls, Etc.	Seating Capacity.	Value of Church Property.	Communi- cants or Members.
California.....	24	15	3,825	8	915	\$28,400	588
Colorado.....	18	8	1,800	10	1,500	32,800	585
Idaho.....	2	.....	.....	2	200	.....	100
Illinois.....	320	245	67,495	58	10,345	260,075	15,429
Indiana.....	569	476	154,762	62	10,425	551,636	35,824
Iowa.....	213	148	29,810	63	8,355	211,323	10,401
Kansas.....	322	128½	33,200	181	20,280	183,770	13,768
Kentucky.....	13	11	2,400	1	75	4,700	567
Maryland.....	57	55	14,300	.....	.....	113,789	4,736
Michigan.....	138	93	27,405	44	5,515	133,250	5,201
Minnesota.....	35	23	4,975	12	1,450	23,375	803
Missouri.....	105	45½	14,150	53	5,325	47,825	4,361
Nebraska.....	147	75	16,775	65	5,085	84,950	5,673
New York.....	35	23	5,975	12	1,015	34,650	953
Ohio.....	745	692	205,755	34	5,295	1,198,870	47,678
Oregon.....	13	8	2,100	5	675	11,100	493
Pennsylvania.....	526	467	147,036	54	5,110	1,086,135	33,951
South Dakota.....	27	7	1,175	18	1,225	4,150	493
Tennessee.....	27	18	5,600	9	1,305	13,985	1,141
Virginia.....	71	66	11,500	3	375	65,940	5,306
Washington.....	18	13	3,400	5	700	22,000	494
West Virginia.....	259	175	54,170	79	7,765	140,645	12,242
Wisconsin.....	47	45	8,850	2	100	39,275	1,687
Total.....	3,731	2,837	816,458	780	93,035	\$4,292,643	202,474

## SUMMARY OF CHURCH PROPERTY.

Value of Churches <sup>1</sup> .....	\$5,197,159 00
Value of Parsonages <sup>1</sup> .....	583,089 00
Publishing House, Assets <sup>2</sup> .....	378,260 90
Missionary Society <sup>2</sup> —	
Permanent Fund.....	\$92,048 36
Mission Property.....	55,000 00
	\$147,048 36
Deduct property reported as churches.....	46,783 00
	100,265 36
Church-Erection Society, Permanent Fund <sup>2</sup> .....	48,000 00
Woman's Missionary Association, Property <sup>2</sup> .....	\$33,400 00
Deduct property reported as churches.....	9,000 00
	24,400 00
Educational Institutions <sup>1</sup> —	
Buildings and Grounds.....	\$435,320 00
Endowment.....	313,643 00
Contingent Assets.....	191,865 00
Libraries.....	16,250 00
Cabinets and Apparatus.....	14,450 00
	971,528 00
	\$7,302,702 26

<sup>1</sup> 1896.    <sup>2</sup> 1897.

## SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

1. Church Originated.....	1766-1800
2. First Known Sunday School, near Corydon, Indiana.....	1820
3. First Sunday School in Otterbein's Church, Baltimore, Maryland.....	1827
4. First Sunday-School Song Book, Words Only.....	1842
5. First Mention of "Sabbath-School" in Book of Discipline.....	1849
6. First Children's Paper Published.....	1854
7. First Organization of Sunday-School Board of Managers.....	1865
8. First Notes on International Sunday-School Lessons, at Commencement of System, January.....	1873
9. First Sunday-School Song Book with Music.....	1873
10. First Sunday-School Library Published.....	1874
11. First Sunday-School Normal Class, at Galion, Ohio.....	1876
12. First Sunday-School Normal Institute, Chautauqua Method, Arcanum, Ohio, October.....	1877
13. First Children's Day, July 4.....	1880
14. First Sunday-School Assembly, Lisbon, Iowa, August.....	1880
15. Organization of Home Reading Circle.....	1881
16. Organization of Bible Normal Union, October 19.....	1886
17. Adoption of Plan of Annual Examination on International Sunday-School Lessons, April.....	1890
18. General Movement Toward Introduction of Home Department in Sunday School, September 14.....	1891

## STATISTICAL.

*Number in Sunday Schools—*

1865.....	73,099	1885.....	194,753
1870.....	128,842	1890.....	245,447
1875.....	160,900	1895.....	286,423
1880.....	185,960	1896.....	290,861

Chautauqua Normal Union, 1874-1884.....	500
Assembly Normal Union, January 1, 1884,-October 19, 1886.....	524
Bible Normal Union, October 19, 1886,-April 24, 1893.....	3,624

ORDINATION OF BISHOPS.<sup>1</sup>

Otterbein ordained in the Reformed Church, 1749.	Newcomer, 1813..	Zeller, 1815.	{	Coons, Newcomer { Davis, Kumler, assisting, 1826... { Jun., assisting, 1842. Hanby, 1833. Edwards, 1839. { Flickinger, 1853. Wright, 1856.		
		Kumler, Sen., 1816.				
		Brown, 1819. {			Glossbrenner, 1833. {	Weaver, 1843. Kephart, 1861. Hott, Markwood assisting, 1864. Mills, 1872.
		Russel, Hoffman assisting, 1822.				
		Kumler, Jun., Hoffman assisting, 1822.				
		Hiestand, Hoffman and Kumler, Sen., assisting, 1824.				
		Erb, Kumler, Sen., { Markwood, 1841. { Castle, 1861. assisting, 1825 ... { Dickson, 1850.				
		Hoffman, 1813..			{	Assisted in ordaining— Russel, 1822. Kumler, Jun., 1822. Hiestand, 1824.
		Rev. Frederick Schaffer, 1813, never a bishop.				
		Shuck, 1847. In the absence of a bishop, ordained by Rev. John Lopp, who was himself ordained by Bishop Kumler, Sen., in 1833.				

<sup>1</sup> See article on "Ordination in the United Brethren Church," by Dr. A. W. Drury, in the *United Brethren Quarterly Review*, Vol. V., pp. 281, 282.



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- Weaver, J.**, in *Sanford's Concise Cyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. New York, Charles L. Webster & Co., 1890.

## II. MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS OF HISTORICAL MATERIAL.

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The official records of the proceedings of the General Conferences from the beginning are in charge of the publishing agent, at Dayton.

## III. PRINTED COLLECTIONS.

### 1. Bibliography.

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<sup>1</sup> All the books here mentioned, unless otherwise stated, are published by the United Brethren Publishing House.

2. *Statistics.*

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A table of comparative statistics, from 1813 to 1887, was published in the Year-Book for 1888. A revised table, brought down to 1896, is printed on pp. 646-648 of this volume.

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This manual includes biographical sketches of editors, publishing agents, and trustees, with numerous portraits, and a bibliography.

For a brief historical outline of Otterbein University, see H. Garst in the *United Brethren Year-Book* for 1888, and M. R. Drury in *Columbian Cyclopaedia*; of Union Biblical Seminary, see *United Brethren Year-Book* for 1888; of Western College, see W. M. Beardshear in *United Brethren Year-Book* for 1889; of Young People's Christian Union, see *United Brethren Year-Book* for 1891, and *Religious Telescope*, Vol. LVII. (1891), p. 282.

6. *Histories of Congregations.*

As the history of congregations is chiefly of local interest, no attempt is here made to present a list of such publications.

## 7. Collections of Biographies.

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## 8. Legal Trials and Decisions.

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## 9. Miscellaneous.

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## IV. DENOMINATIONAL RELATIONS.

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## VII. DOCTRINAL, SYMBOLICAL, CONTROVERSIAL, AND PRACTICAL.

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## APPENDICES



# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX I

### THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST—ITS VARIOUS CHANGES<sup>1</sup>

Correctness attested by A. W. Drury, D.D., and J. P. Landis, D.D.

#### CONFESSION IN USE PRIOR TO 1815.

“ARTICLE 1. In the name of God we confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; that these three are one; the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence with both ; that this God created heaven and earth and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, and sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

“ART. 2. We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man, Saviour and Redeemer of the whole world; that all men through him may be saved if they will; that this Jesus suffered for us; that he died and was buried, rose on the third day, ascended into heaven, and that he will come again, at the last day, to judge the living and the dead.

“ART. 3. We believe in the Holy Ghost ; that he proceeds from the Father and the Son ; that we through him must be sanctified and receive faith, thereby being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

“ART. 4. We believe that the Bible is the word of God ; that it contains the true way to our souls' well-being and salvation ; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it, with the influences of the Spirit of God, as his only rule and guide ; and that without repentance, faith in Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins, and following after Jesus Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

“ART. 5. We believe that the doctrine which the Holy Scriptures contain, namely, the fall in Adam and salvation through Jesus Christ, shall be preached and proclaimed throughout the whole world.

Reprinted from a pamphlet published in 1890.

"We recommend that the outward signs and ordinances, namely, baptism and the remembrance of the Lord in the distribution of the bread and wine, be observed; also the washing of feet, where the same is desired."<sup>1</sup>

#### THE CONFESSION IN GERMAN.

##### THE ORIGINAL GERMAN TEXT OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST AS GIVEN IN THE DISCIPLINE OF 1815.

(Original printed in German only. For a strict translation, see page 660.)

#### **Das Glaubens-Bekentniß der Vereinigten Brüder in Christo.**

Im Namen Gottes bekennen wir vor jedermann, daß wir glauben an den einigen wahren Gott, Vater, Sohn und Heiligen Geist; daß diese Drey Eins sind, der Vater im Sohn, der Sohn im Vater und der Heilige Geist gleiches Wesen mit beyden; daß dieser dreyeinige Gott Himmel und Erden und alles was darinnen ist, sowohl sichtbar als unsichtbar, erschaffen hat, trägt, regiert, schützt und erhält.

Wir glauben an Jesum Christum, daß er wahrer Gott und Mensch ist, daß er seine **menschliche Natur** durch den Heiligen Geist in Maria angenommen, und von ihr gebohren; daß er Heiland und Versöhner des ganzen menschlichen Geschlechts ist, wenn sie die in Jesu angebotene Gnade im Glauben an ihn annehmen; daß dieser Jesus für uns gelitten hat, am Stamme des Kreuzes gestorben, begraben, am dritten Tage wieder auferstanden, gen Himmel gefahren, welcher ist zur Rechten Gottes und vertritt uns; und wieder kommen wird, am jüngsten Tage, zu richten die Lebendigen und die Todten.

**Wir glauben an den Heiligen Geist, daß er gleiches Wesens mit dem Vater und dem Sohn, daß er von beyden ausgeht, daß wir durch ihn erleuchtet, durch den Glauben gerechtfertiget und geheiligt werden.**

**Wir glauben eine Heilige Gemeinde, Gemeinschaft der Heiligen, Auferstehung des Fleisches und ein ewiges Leben.**

Wir glauben daß die Bibel, altes und neues Testament, Gottes Wort ist; daß sie den wahren Weg zu unserer Seligkeit enthalte, daß ein jeder wahre Christ, dieselbe mit den Einflüssen des Geistes Gottes einzig und allein zu seiner Richtschnur nehmen soll, und daß ohne Glauben an Jesum Christum, wahre Buße, Vergebung der Sünden und Nachfolge Christi, niemand ein wahrer Christ seyn kann.

**Wir glauben daß die Lehre welche die Heilige Schrift enthält, nemlich: den Fall in Adam und die Erlösung durch Jesum Christum, der ganzen Welt sollte gepredigt werden.**

Wir glauben daß die äußere **Gnaden-Mittel** in den Gemeinden Christi geübt werden sollten, nemlich: die Taufe und **das Gedächtniß des Todes des Herrn, in Austheilung des Brods und Weins, die sollen nach dem Befehl des Herrn Jesu, unter seinen Kindern geübt werden; die Art und Weise soll aber einem**

Translation of Manuscript Discipline, 1814.



jeden nach seiner Erkenntniß überlassen werden. Auch das Beyspiel von Fußwaschen stehet einem jeden frey.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CONFESSIONS OF 1815 AND 1817.

*Menschliche Natur* changed to *Menschheit*.

The third paragraph, on the Holy Ghost, changed to read as follows: *Wir glauben an den Heiligen Geist, dass er gleiches Wesens mit dem Vater und Sohn, dass er die Gläubige tröste und sie in alle Wahrheit leite.*

*Heilige Gemeinde* changed to *Heilige Christliche Gemeinde*.

*Dass die Lehre welche die Heilige Schrift enthält* changed to *dass die Heilige Schrift enthält*.

*Gnaden-Mittel* changed to *Mittel*.

*Des Todtes des Herrn* changed to *des Todtes des Herrn Jesu*.

The following omitted in 1817: *In Austheilung des Brods und Weins, die sollen nach dem Befehl des Herrn Jesu.*

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CONFESSIONS IN DISCIPLINES OF  
1817 AND 1819.

*Bekennen wir* changed to *erklären und bekennen wir*.

*Eine heilige Christliche Gemeinde* changed to *an eine heilige Christliche Gemeinde*.

*Wir glauben dass die äussere* changed to *Wir halten dafür, dass die äussere*.

*Unter seinen Kindern geübt werden* changed to *Dass es seinen Kindern obliegt dieselbe besonders zu üben*.

The Confession in Discipline of 1821 is the same as that in Discipline of 1819.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CONFESSIONS OF 1821 AND 1825.

*Wir hatten dafür, dass die äussere Mittel in den Gemeinden Christi* changed to *Wir sind überzeugt dass die äusseren Gnaden-Mittel*.

*Des Todes des Herrn Jesu* changed to *Des Todes unsers Herrn Jesu Christi*.

*In den Gemeinden Christi* changed to *in allen Christlichen Gemeinden*.

*Dass es seinen Kindern obliegt dieselbe besonders zu üben* changed to *Dass es Kindern Gottes besonders geziemet, dieselben zu gebrauchen*.

*Die Art und Weise aber soll einem jeden nach seiner Erkenntniß überlassen werden. Auch das Beyspiel von Fusswaschen stehet einem jeden frey* changed to *Die Art und Weise aber, wie dieselbe geübt werden sollen, soll dem Urtheil und dem Erkenntniß eines jeglichen überlassen seyn. Auch das Beyspiel des Fusswaschens stehet einem jeden frey zu üben oder zu unterlassen*.

All of the following was added to the Confession of 1825 :

*" Jedoch ist es keinem unserer Prediger geziemend, seinen Mitbruder, dessen Urtheil und Erkenntniss von dem seinigen verschieden ist, desswegen öffentlich oder in Privat zu verkleinern, oder seine Art und Weise, wie er dieselbe übt, zu verachten; wer sich hierin schuldig macht, soll als ein Verläumder seiner Brüder geachtet, und deshalb der jährlichen Conferenz verantwortlich seyn."*

#### CONFESSIONS OF 1825 AND 1833 COMPARED.

*Auferstehung des Fleisches* changed to *Auferstehung des Leibes*.

*Dass die äusseren Gnaden-Mittel* changed to *Dass die äusseren Verordnungen*.

#### CONFESSIONS OF 1837 AND 1841 COMPARED.

*Unserer Prediger geziemend* changed to *unserer Prediger oder Gemeindes-gliedern geziemend*.

*Deshalb der jährlichen Conferenz verantwortlich sein* changed to *deshalb verantwortlich sein*.

#### CONFESSIONS OF 1845 AND 1857 COMPARED.

*Erkenntniss von dem seinigen* changed to *Erkenntniss von dem seinigen in diesen Beziehungen*.

*Wer sich hierin schuldig macht* changed to *Wer sich dessen schuldig macht*.

Various other changes in the German form were made after 1845. The words *in diesen Beziehungen*, meaning "in these respects," were not introduced into the German Discipline until 1857.

#### THE CONFESSION IN ENGLISH.

##### TRANSLATION OF CONFESSION OF 1815.

(Words in italics indicate *additions to or changes in* the Confession in use prior to 1815. Words in brackets indicate *omissions* from that Confession.)

No English translation of the German Confession of 1815 was made at the time. The following is a strict translation of it :

"[ARTICLE 1.] In the name of God we confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that these three are one, the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence with both; that this *triune* God created heaven and earth, and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, [and] sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

"[ART. 2.] We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man; *that he, by the Holy Ghost, assumed his human nature in Mary,*

*and was born of her; that he is the Saviour and Redeemer of the whole human race, if they with faith in him accept the grace proffered in Jesus; that this Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us, was buried, rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God to intercede for us; and that he shall come again, at the last day, to judge the living and the dead.*

"[ART. 3.] We believe in the Holy Ghost; that *he is equal in being with the Father and the Son; that he proceeds from both; that we are through him enlightened; through faith justified and sanctified.*

*"We believe in a holy church, communion of saints, resurrection of the flesh, and a life everlasting."*<sup>1</sup>

"[ART. 4.] We believe that the Bible, *Old and New Testament*, is the word of God; that it contains the true way to our [souls' well-being and] salvation; that every true Christian is bound to [acknowledge and] receive it with the influences of the Spirit of God, as his only rule [and guide]; and that without *faith in Jesus Christ, true penitence, forgiveness of sins, and following after [Jesus] Christ*, no one can be a true Christian.

"[ART. 5.] We believe that the doctrine which the Holy Scriptures contain, namely, the fall in Adam and *the redemption* through Jesus Christ, shall be preached [and proclaimed] throughout the whole world.

*"We believe that the outward means of grace are to be in use in all Christian societies, namely: that baptism and the remembrance of the death of the Lord in the distribution of the bread and wine are to be in use among his children, according to the command of the Lord Jesus; the mode and manner, however, shall be left to the judgment of every one. Also, the example of feet-washing remains free to every one."*

CONFESSION AS TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN INTO ENGLISH  
AND FOUND IN THE DISCIPLINE BEARING DATE 1819,  
THIS BEING THE FIRST TRANSLATION INTO  
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

(Words in italics indicate additions to or changes in the Confession of 1815. Words in brackets indicate omissions from that Confession.)

*"The Confession of Faith of the United Brethren in Christ.*

"In the name of God we declare and confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, *the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; that these three are one, the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence *or being* with both; that this triune God created *the heavens and the earth*, and all that

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph was not in the Confession prior to 1815.

in them is, visible as well as invisible; *and furthermore* sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

"We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man; *that he became incarnate by the power of the Holy Ghost in the virgin Mary*, and was born of her; that he is the Saviour and *Mediator* of the whole human race, if they with *full* faith in him accept the grace proffered in Jesus; that this Jesus suffered and died on the cross for us, was buried, arose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God to intercede for us; and that he shall come again at the last day to judge the *quick* and the dead.

"We believe in the Holy Ghost, that he is equal in being with the Father and the Son, *and that he comforts the faithful, and guides them into all truth.*

"We believe in a holy *Christian* church, the communion of saints, the resurrection of the *body*, and [a] life everlasting.

"We believe that the *Holy* Bible, Old and New *Testaments*, is the word of God; that it contains the *only* true way to our salvation; that every true Christian is bound to *acknowledge* and receive it with the *influence* of the Spirit of God, as *their* only rule and *guide*; and that without faith in Jesus Christ, *as also* true penitence, forgiveness of sins, and following after Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

"We also believe that *what is contained* in the Holy Scriptures, *to wit*: the fall in Adam and the redemption through Jesus Christ, shall be preached throughout the [whole] world.

"We further think that the outward means, namely, baptism and the remembrance of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus, are to be in use and practiced in all Christian societies; and that it is incumbent on his children particularly to practice them. But the manner in which ought always to be left to the judgment and understanding of each. So also the practice or example of washing the feet must remain free to the judgment of every one."<sup>1</sup>

1825.

The General Conference of 1825 so changed the Confession of Faith after the phrase, "shall be preached throughout the world," as to read as follows:

"We are convinced that the outward means of grace, namely, baptism and the remembrance of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be in use and practiced by all Christian societies, and that it is incumbent on *all the* children of God, particularly, to practice them; but the manner in which ought always

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph was recast throughout.



to be left to the judgment and understanding of *every individual*. So also the [practice or] example of washing the feet *is left* to the judgment of every one to *practice or not*; *but it is not becoming any of our preachers to traduce any of his brethren whose judgment and understanding in this respect are different from his own, either in public or in private; whosoever shall make himself guilty in this respect shall be accounted a traducer of his brethren and shall therefore be answerable to the annual conference.*"

1833.

The General Conference of 1833 made further changes, as follows:

"And that without faith in Jesus Christ, *true repentance*, forgiveness of sins, and following after Christ, no one can be a true Christian."

"We *believe* that the *ordinances*, namely, baptism and the remembrance of the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be in use and practiced by all Christian societies; and that it is incumbent on all the children of God, particularly, to practice them; but the manner in which ought always to be left to the judgment and understanding of every individual. So, also, the example of washing the feet is left to the judgment of every one to practice or not; but it is not becoming any of our preachers to traduce any of his brethren whose judgment and understanding in this respect are different from his own, either in public or in private; whosoever shall make himself guilty in this respect shall be accounted a traducer of his brethren, and shall *therefor* be answerable to the annual conference."

1837.

The General Conference of 1837 so changed the closing sentence above as to make it read thus: "Whosoever shall make himself guilty in this respect shall be *considered* a traducer of his brethren, and shall be answerable *for the same* to the annual conference."

This General Conference also adopted a constitution, in which occur the words, "Nothing shall be done so as to change the article of faith."

The General Conference of 1841 again amended the Confession of Faith as follows (new words in italics, words omitted in brackets): "Also, the example of washing [the] feet is left to the judgment of every one to practice or not; but it is not becoming *for* any of our preachers *or members* to traduce any of his brethren whose judgment and understanding in this respect are different from his own, either in public or [in] private. Whosoever shall make himself guilty in this respect shall be considered a traducer of his brethren, and shall be answerable for the same [to the annual conference]."

*The* is left out in the phrase "washing *the* feet."

*For* is inserted in "it is not becoming *for* any of our preachers."

The words *or members* are inserted after "preachers."

*In* is omitted before "private."

The words "to the annual conference" are left out.

This is the General Conference that made and adopted the old Constitution.

1845.

The General Conference of 1845 changed the words, "to traduce any of his brethren whose judgment and understanding in this respect are different from his own," to "to traduce any of *their* brethren whose judgment and understanding in this respect are different from *their* own."

1857.

The General Conference of 1857 changed the words "in this respect" in the Confession of Faith as occurring after the words "and understanding" to the words "in these respects."

It should be noted that the General Conference did all this. Nothing was ever submitted to the voice of the membership prior to 1888.

## APPENDIX II

### DECISIONS OF THE SUPREME AND CIRCUIT COURTS OF OHIO IN THE PUBLISHING HOUSE SUIT<sup>1</sup>

#### DECISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO.

No. 3,001. *Halleck Floyd et al. v. David L. Rike et al.*; Montgomery County. The case has been fully and exhaustively considered in the opinion of the Circuit Court, as announced by Shearer, J., *Rike et al. v. Floyd et al.*, 6 O. C. C. Reports, 80. We fully affirm the reasoning of the Court and the conclusions there rendered. Judgment affirmed. Shauck, J., did not sit in the case.

#### DECISION OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, SECOND CIRCUIT, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, OHIO.<sup>2</sup>

JUNE TERM, 1891.

CHARLES C. SHEARER,  
GILBERT H. STEWART,  
JAMES M. SMITH, } *Judges.*

(Judge Smith, of the First Circuit, taking the place of Judge Shauck.)

DAVID L. RIKE *et al.*, *Trustees*, }  
vs. }  
HALLECK FLOYD *et al.*

#### OPINION.

SHEARER, J.

Under the issues presented by the above-quoted pleadings<sup>3</sup> a large amount of testimony, oral and documentary, has been introduced; and without entering into an analysis of the evidence, we, in compliance with the request of counsel, and to enable them to except to the decision upon the questions of law involved in the trial, state our conclusions of fact found, separately from our conclusions of law, as follows:

#### *Findings of Fact.*

[ A large number of facts found are here omitted as not necessary

<sup>1</sup> See p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> See 6 Ohio Circuit Court Reports, 80.

<sup>3</sup> The petition of the plaintiffs, the answer and cross-petition of the defendants, and the reply of the plaintiffs precede the opinion, and are here omitted.

to an understanding of the opinion, and as matter well known to the Church.—ED.]

\* \* \*

It is further found, that since the General Conference of 1889 the doctrine and beliefs preached and taught by both "Liberals" and "Radicals" in no wise differ from those preached and taught by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ prior to said General Conference. All the distinctive principles, ceremonies, usages, and customs have been retained and practiced in the Church by the "Liberals" as fully and strictly as was done before the adoption of the revised Confession and amended Constitution, except that they have admitted to membership in the Church members of secret organizations.

It is further found, that said amended Constitution and Confession of Faith were adopted by the General Conference of the Church, upon the request of the requisite number of the membership, and in good faith; that said revised Confession of Faith is not antagonistic to the doctrines, faith, or belief of the Church as they existed at the date of the several conveyances in the petition mentioned, or since; that there is no substantial or material difference between the old and new Confessions of Faith.

It is further found, that said election of the said plaintiffs as trustees and of said Shuey as publishing agent was had in all respects as required by the rules and regulations of the Church; and that said plaintiffs and said Shuey severally accept the amended Constitution and revised Confession of Faith, and claim to be acting under and in accordance with the same.

Such is our finding of facts. The next inquiry is as to the conclusions of law to be deduced therefrom.

#### *Conclusions of Law.*

Much time has been devoted by counsel to the history and legislation of the United Brethren Church from its foundation in the last century, interesting and instructive, but of little value as an aid to the solution of the questions involved in this controversy.

We have found the Constitution of 1841 to be valid organic law from the time of its adoption until May 13, 1889, at which time the change was made the validity of which the defendants challenge. That instrument provides (Article II., Section 4) that "No rule or ordinance shall at any time be passed to change or do away the Confession of Faith as it now stands, nor to destroy the itinerant plan"; and Article IV. ordains that "There shall be no alteration of the foregoing Constitution, unless by request of two-thirds of the whole society."



Was there such request? The Constitution is silent as to the method by which this "request" shall be preferred, leaving the Conference to suggest, or the people to adopt, any form of request they may deem proper. The General Conference appointed a Commission to formulate an amended Constitution and a revised Confession of Faith, and provided that such Commission should "adopt and cause to be executed a plan by which such measures should receive the largest possible attention and expression of approval or disapproval by our people," etc.

The largest publicity was given to the pendency of these measures through the official organs of the Church, by pamphlets, from the pulpit, and otherwise, as well as of the time when the vote would be taken. Ballots were prepared and circulated throughout the membership, and every means adopted to secure a full expression of the views of the membership upon the proposed changes.

Following this, after a three years' canvass, came the election, at which an extraordinarily large vote was cast.

In pursuance of the plan of the Conference in that behalf, returns of the vote were made from the annual conferences to the General Board of Tellers, at Dayton, Ohio, and that board in turn prepared and returned to the Board of Bishops a consolidated abstract of the vote, which showed a majority in favor of the amendments largely in excess of two-thirds of the votes polled, even if the 16,187 members protesting, but not voting, were counted as voting "No."

Was not this almost unanimous vote in favor of the proposed amendments a "request"? Was it necessary that the "request" should proceed from the membership without any suggestion from any quarter that it be made? Why might not the Conference advise or suggest that such "request" be made? No reason occurs to us why it might not, nor why a request so made would be unconstitutional.

The objection on this score is more technical than substantial. The vote was a "request."

But defendants say, conceding said request to be sufficient, the Constitution required it to be by "two-thirds of the whole society."

But what should be the construction of the phrase "two-thirds of the whole society"? Does it mean two-thirds of the entire number borne upon the Church rolls as members? Or does it mean two-thirds of those voting?

We do not think the fathers who ordained the Constitution of 1841 intended to follow the example of the Medes and Persians, and fetter future generations for all time, unless two-thirds of all the members—men, women, children, non-communicants, those "beyond sea," African converts, and all—should request the change. Such

construction can hardly be insisted upon, in the light of the testimony that the Church was opposed to "numbering Israel" at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of 1841, and for many years afterwards.

The framers of the rule must have meant that two-thirds of those voting should be sufficient; otherwise, how were they to determine that the requisite majority had voted for or against a measure, there being no provision for an enumeration, and the Church being opposed to making one?

We are bound to assume that the rule was made in the light of the fact that enumerations were not favored, and that, therefore, the phrase was used in its generally accepted sense—two-thirds of those voting.

The Constitution of 1837 provided that "No General Conference shall have power to alter or amend the foregoing Constitution, except it be by a vote of two-thirds of that body."

Under this limitation, could not the General Conference, by a vote of two-thirds of a quorum, change the organic law, although strictly the phrase "two-thirds of that body" means two-thirds of all the members of that body? We think so. And so the phrase "two-thirds of the members of the whole society," while it literally signifies two-thirds of all the members of the Church, means, in the sense in which it is used in the Constitution of 1841, two-thirds of those members who vote.

In *Carroll County v. Smith*, 111 United States, which concerned an election held under a statute of Mississippi, authorizing subscriptions to the capital stock of a railroad company by municipalities upon certain conditions, among which was the submission of the question "to the qualified voters of said county, city, etc., . . . and if two-thirds of the qualified voters vote in favor of the subscription, . . . the constituted authorities . . . are authorized and required to subscribe," etc., Mr. Justice Matthews held that an assenting vote of two-thirds of the whole number enrolled as qualified to vote was not required, but that two-thirds of those actually voting at the election was sufficient.

And in *Walker v. Oswald*, 68 Md., 146, the Court say: "When an election is held at which a subject matter is to be determined by a majority of the voters entitled to cast ballots thereat, those absenting themselves, and those who, being present, abstain from voting, are considered as acquiescing in the result declared by a majority of those actually voting, even though, in point of fact, but a minority of those entitled to vote really do vote."

See also *St. Joseph v. Rogers*, 16 Wall., 663; *Wardens of Christ Church v. Pope*, 8 Gray, 140-43; *Richardson v. Society*, 58 N. H., 188;

*Green v. Weller*, 32 Miss., 850; *Prohib. Amen't Cases*, 24 Kans., 200; *Dayton v. St. Paul*, 22 Minn., 400; *Miller v. English*, 24 N. J. L., 17; *County of Cass v. Johnston*, 95 U. S., 360; 72 Ill., 63; 1 Sneed, 690; 10 Minn., 85; 37 Mo., 270; 69 Ind., 505; 20 Amer. Corp. Cases, 93; McCrary on Elections, 173.

But we are not confined to secular authority, for in accord with the above cases is the interpretation of the Constitution by the General Conference, the court of last resort of the Church. That it construed the phrase "whole society" to mean those voting upon the changes, is apparent from the provision in the plan of submission that said changes should be held to be adopted when two-thirds of the members who voted upon them were found to have voted affirmatively. And the approval by the General Conference of 1889 of the report of the Commission which set out the vote upon the changes, is an affirmance of such interpretation.

It being clear that a majority of two-thirds of those voting was sufficient for the adoption of the amended Constitution and the revised Confession of Faith, the next question is, whether the adoption of the latter operated to "change or do away the Confession of Faith" as it stood prior to the revision.

This question must be answered in the negative. Changes have been made, but in no material or substantial respect. They consist in alterations of phraseology without changing the sense, and in the addition of statements of doctrine which have been taught and believed by the Church from its foundation, and which, while not expressed in the old, are comprehended by implication. No new doctrine is introduced, no old dogma or article of faith is eliminated. The revised Confession involves no departure from the faith of the Church as taught from the beginning.

That the old Confession of Faith permitted latitudinarianism, while the new is more explicit and inflexible, is urged as a reason why we should hold that there has been a departure from the standards of the Church, so serious as to destroy its identity.

But, as we have seen, there is no statement of doctrine in the new Confession which has not always been taught and believed by the Church; and as a creed is a mere system of principles professed or believed, we can perceive no impropriety in expressing in orderly form those principles which, although believed and accepted as distinctive doctrine, are not formulated, or, if stated, are crude or equivocal.

If the revised Confession makes no change in the doctrines of the Church, it is not to be condemned for its greater certainty and perspicuity as compared with the creed which it supplants. Obscure and equivocal language may be commendable in a political platform, but should find no place in articles of religious faith.

We cannot assent to the claims of counsel that the concession that the new Confession differs from the old involves the admission that the new establishes different doctrine. Mere verbal changes do not necessarily alter the doctrine; neither does the expression in the new Confession of that which is implied in the old have that effect.

One of the defendants, upon his examination, admitted that the doctrines stated in the revised Confession of Faith are not unscriptural, nor antagonistic to the teachings of the Church prior to the separation. Yet it is contended that there have been seven omissions of doctrine—five alterations directly, and others indirectly, and twenty additions. Among the seven “omissions” is the “disciplinary rule against traducing brethren.” No knowledge of theology is necessary to understand that rules of polity have no proper place in a creed or confession of faith. The remaining six “omissions” are not apparent from a comparison of the two creeds. The doctrines supposed to be omitted are fairly implied in the new Confession.

Without further illustration, we are clear, as we have already said, that no substantial or material changes have been made in the creed of the Church. The efforts of those learned in theology to bring to light essential differences savor more of the ecclesiastical hair-splitting of the era of polemics and scholasticism, than of these days of advanced thought and practical Christianity.

But if our conclusions in this regard are wrong, is not the decision of the General Conference, the supreme judicatory of the Church, conclusive?

Controversies in the civil courts concerning the property rights of that class of religious societies to which the Church of the United Brethren in Christ belongs, namely, the class having an ascending series of judicatories, such as official boards, quarterly conferences, annual conferences, and a General Conference, are to be decided, where the title is held by purchase, by reference to this proposition: That where the right of property in the civil court is dependent on the question of doctrine, discipline, ecclesiastical law, rule, custom, or church government, and that has been decided by the highest tribunal within the organization to which it has been carried, the civil court will accept that decision as conclusive, and be governed by it in its application to the case before it. *Watson v. Jones*, 13 Wall., 679, 727.

The doctrine just stated seems to answer affirmatively the question above propounded. This controversy grows out of questions of purely ecclesiastical cognizance; and the General Conference, having jurisdiction by virtue of the request of two-thirds of the whole society, decided them adversely to the defendants, and such decision is final and conclusive. *Connitt v. Ref. Prot. Dutch Ch.*, 54 N. Y., 551; *Wat-*



*kings v. Wilcox*, 66 N. Y., 654; *Chase v. Cheney*, 38 Ill., 511; *White Lick Quaker Case*, 89 Ind., 136; *Harrison v. Hoyle*, 24 O. S., 254; 45 Pa. St., 1; 45 Mo., 183; *Gaff v. Greet*, 88 Ind., 122; *Shannon v. Frost*, 3 B. Mon., 253; *Gibson v. Armstrong*, 7 B. Mon., 481; *Harmon v. Dreher*, 1 Speer's Eq., 87; *High on Injunctions*, Secs. 310, 314.

It follows, also, from what we have said, that there has been no perversion of the trusts vested in plaintiffs. Such perversion, to entitle the party alleging it to relief, must be clearly shown; it must be a plain and radical departure. See *Gable v. Miller*, 2 Denio, 492, 548; 66 N. Y., 654; 38 N. H., 460; 33 Ill., 398; 61 Ill., 405; 41 Pa. St., 13.

Other questions have been discussed, but they are not deemed material to the decision of the case.

It follows, and we state as conclusions of law:

That the plaintiffs are the lawful trustees of said Printing Establishment; and that said Shuey is the duly elected and qualified publishing agent of said Church; that said plaintiffs as such trustees are entitled to the possession, management, and control of said real and other property in the petition described, and to have the title thereto quieted in them and their successors, against the said adverse claims of the said defendants and each and every of them.

That said defendants have not, nor has any of them, any right, title, or claim to the possession, management, or control of any of the property aforesaid, as trustees or otherwise, nor to any of the proceeds thereof; and they and their successors ought to be forever restrained and enjoined from in any wise interfering with the plaintiffs as trustees and the said Shuey as publishing agent, or their successors, in the possession, management, and control of said property, or the proceeds thereof.

That said defendants are not, nor is any of them, entitled to any relief sought by them, or any of them, herein, and their several cross-petitions will be dismissed at their costs.

*Decree accordingly.*

*Gunkel & Rowe*, and *J. A. McMahon*, for Plaintiffs.

*William Lawrence*, *George W. Houk*, and *Young & Young*, for Defendants.



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